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CO-TEACHING PARTNERSHIPS: HOW CULTURE OF SCHOOLS AND CLASSROOMS AFFECT PRACTICES IN CO-PLANNING AND CO-IMPLEMENTING INSTRUCTION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University.

by

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PH. D. IN EDUCATION

This is to certify that the dissertation prepared by Cecilia Gray Batalo, entitled:

CO-TEACHING PARTNERSHIPS: HOW CULTURE OF SCHOOLS AND CLASSROOMS AFFECT PRACTICES IN CO-PLANNING AND CO-IMPLEMENTING INSTRUCTION

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much needed area of research. Without you, this process could not have been completed and the additional body of knowledge would have remained a mystery.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the people that have remained by my side as I experienced my trials and tribulations along the way.

To my dissertation chair, Dr. Paul J. Gerber, thank you for your constant support and encouragement. I especially appreciate you keeping me grounded and focused on the ultimate goal of obtaining this degree. That speck of light at the end of the tunnel grew larger and brighter each day because of you.

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To my daughter, Victoria B. Swartz, you are my inspiration. I hope that this accomplishment will inspire you to follow your dreams and accomplish what others may deem unattainable.

To my grandson, Brody R. Swartz, you are my reminder that there is always another opportunity to learn and grow. I hope that you will become a scholar in your own right.

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ABSTRACT

CO-TEACHING PARTNERSHIPS: HOW CULTURE OF SCHOOLS AND CLASSROOMS AFFECT PRACTICES IN CO-PLANNING AND CO-IMPLEMENTING INSTRUCTION

By: Cecilia Gray Batalo, Ph.D.

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2014

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The purpose of this study was to describe how the school and classroom cultures affected practices of inclusion for students with disabilities and how the inclusionary practice of co-teaching was influenced by the school culture. This study sought to investigate school and classroom cultures and their impact on practices of inclusion. It also addressed the perceptions of the impact that the school and classroom cultures had on co-teaching and why some practices are effective or not effective for co-planning or co-implementation. A multicase study design was used to gather and explore observations and interviews. Data were analyzed through qualitative methods with a focus on norms, values, and routines. This study provided an understanding of how school and classroom cultures affected inclusion within one school district

in Virginia in order to inform elements needed for successful inclusion of students with disabilities through use of the co-teaching model.

Keywords: co-teaching, co-planning, co-implementation, school culture

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

History

A change in public education occurred in the United States in 1975 with passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children's Act (P. L. 94-142). This law ensured students with disabilities access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) within the least restrictive environment (LRE; Turnbull, Turnbull, Wehmeyer, & Shogren, 2013). However, the LRE concept at the time of the passage of P.L. 94-142 was flawed. Taylor (1988) stated that the principle of LRE legitimated restrictive environments and caused confusion over how special education services were provided in relation to the intensity of services required by students with disabilities to obtain a FAPE. By 1977, the final federal regulations of P.L. 94-142 were enacted and provided school districts with a set of rules for providing an appropriate education for students with disabilities (USDOE, 2007). Parallel education systems (i.e., one for special education students and one for general education students) resulted and functioned as separate entities within the same school building, as students with disabilities were isolated from students without disabilities for specialized academic instruction (Lipsky & Gartner, 1996). At this juncture, the idea of collaboration between the special education teacher and the general education teacher for service delivery was not yet conceived. Special education students and special education teachers were housed in public school buildings, but were isolated from

students without disabilities and general education teachers for a portion of the school day (Moore, Gilbreath, & Maiuri, 1998).

The movement toward inclusion took flight in 1986 when Madeleine Will, Assistant Secretary of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, stated that special education needs "to establish a partnership with regular education to cooperatively assess the education needs of students with learning problems and to cooperatively develop effective strategies for meeting those needs" (Will, 1986, p. 415). As a result, inclusion in the LRE for students with disabilities was first presented as the practice of mainstreaming with integration of students with disabilities into general education classrooms for a portion of the day (Bauwens & Hourcade, 1995). Next, the students were involved in cooperative teaching which also provided special education services for a portion of the school day in general education classrooms; thus, the term co-teaching was born (Bauwens & Hourcade, 1995; Bauwens, Hourcade, & Friend, 1989). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1990, with reauthorizations in 1997 and 2004, emphasized children's rights to educational services as these laws supported the need for use of the LRE (USDOE, 2007). In particular, the reauthorization of IDEA in 1997 emphasized that the preferred placement for students with disabilities was in general education classrooms with appropriate support services (Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; USDOE, 2007). These laws promoted a philosophical and practical shift in how to best meet the educational needs of students with disabilities within the LRE (Lipsky & Gartner, 1996; Weiss & Lloyd, 2002). In addition, these same laws set higher expectations for students with disabilities, required the use of proven practices and materials, and put accountability measures in place for promoting more flexibility in schools (Damore & Murray, 2009).

Varying levels of inclusion for students with disabilities have been supported by law for over 30 years. One model for inclusion is co-teaching. This model for service delivery of special education has been available as an option to students with disabilities for approximately 20 years. With administrative dictates and school cultures that support inclusion, co-teaching will continue as an option for providing special education services to students with disabilities for years to come.

Overview of the Study

School and classroom cultures have great influence on teachers, students, and parents and are evident in norms, values, and routines reflected by a staff. When the culture is accepting and positive, there is potential for academic and social success for all students and teachers, providing an opportunity for maximizing teaching and learning in every classroom (Horner et al., 2009). School culture affects the practices in which staff members (e.g., administrators, guidance counselors, general education teachers, special education teachers, and related services personnel) engage, in part, to include students with disabilities in all aspects of the school environment.

For students with disabilities to perceive themselves as integral members of the school environment, the practice of inclusion needs to be aligned with the school culture. The norm of the school culture must include risk takers (i.e., change agents), particularly at the administrative level, who provide both support and time to institutionalize the change for inclusion resulting in collaborative school cultures (Friend & Cook, 1992; Waldron & McLeskey, 2010). Young (2008) speaks to the workplace socialization that is necessary for teachers. This socialization will help teachers and other school staff to understand the need for a myriad of social strategies

in order to make adjustments to their thinking to include students with disabilities in the general education classroom.

Teachers and administrators are often at a disadvantage with this way of thinking regarding inclusion. These individuals are socialized through their own life experiences, training, and philosophies about how schools should be structured, which may not have included students with disabilities in general education classrooms. According to Zeichner and Gore (1990), the default conditions of socialization are apprenticeship and school culture. Zeichner and Gore (1990) believed that teachers have experiences and beliefs which mix with the culture of a school, and, in turn, socialize teachers to the teaching profession. In order for students with disabilities to truly become a part of a school, there needs to be support for inclusion by all staff. One method for providing inclusion is co-teaching.

Overview of the Literature

Public policy support for inclusion became evident in 1990 with passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA; P.L. 105-17), formerly known as the Education for All Handicapped Children's Act. Public school students with disabilities were provided access to general education classrooms for academic instruction (Welch, Brownell, & Sheridan, 1999). Through the reauthorizations of IDEA in 1997 (P.L. 105-17) and 2004 (P.L. 108-446), emphasis was placed on improving educational outcomes and accountability for all students, with continued emphasis on use of the least restrictive environment. These laws also set higher expectations for students with disabilities, required the use of proven practices and materials, and put accountability measures in place for promoting more flexibility in schools (Damore & Murray, 2009). In addition, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) that was passed in 2001 and signed in 2002 required standards-based education reform, annual testing, and

changes in teacher qualifications (Silverstein, 2000). With emphasis on inclusion of students with disabilities in general education environments through use of the least restrictive environment, students with disabilities had exposure to the general education curriculum to the same degree as did students without disabilities.

The co-teaching inclusion model served as an alternative to placement in a more restrictive environment. This model included four components which consisted of (1) two educators, (2) delivery of meaningful instruction, (3) diverse groups of students, and (4) common settings that were conducted in a single physical space of a general education classroom (Cook & Friend, 1995; Naraian, 2010). There were six types of co-teaching models described by Morocco and Aguilar (2002) that included (1) alternate leading and supporting, (2) station teaching, (3) parallel teaching, (4) flexible grouping, (5) alternate teaching, and (6) team teaching. Co-teaching benefited all students as it promoted inclusive practices (Leonard & Leonard, 2003) and was considered the *hallmark* of inclusion as it brought services and supports to students with disabilities in general education environments (Kilanowski-Press, Foote, & Rinaldo, 2010). Practices, that co-teachers used for these inclusive classrooms, in regard to how they co-planned and co-implemented instruction, needed investigation. This investigation resulted in a presentation of effective and not effective practices for developing and implementing instruction. This information has the potential to offer assistance to other co-teachers and administrators regarding positive expectations and best practices in the development of a school culture for supporting students with disabilities both academically and socially.

Rationale for the Study

After a thorough review of the literature on co-teaching, only one study was found which addressed the academic culture of classrooms. No studies addressed the general school culture,

or the overarching mission and vision from the school district level which may have had an impact on the development of today's school and classroom cultures. This gap pointed to the need for knowledge of the elements of the school culture that influenced inclusion of students with disabilities through the use of models such as co-teaching. These elements included the norms, values, and routines of the school and classrooms, which were influenced by the staff of resisters (i.e., those staff members who did not like change) and risk takers (i.e., change agents) and led by the leadership team within the school (Friend & Cook, 1992). It was the members of the leadership team who either led the resistance or opted for change, and these same individuals were the ones who established the school culture (*ibid*).

Statement of the Problem

School culture affects the practices of inclusion for students with disabilities. Co-teaching between two teachers (i.e., general education teacher and special education teacher) can be effective in inclusive classrooms as demonstrated by students' academic and social success (Cramer & Nevin, 2006). Some school administrators are not in favor of using co-teaching and, instead, force a school culture of two entities, the general education culture and the special education culture. In this instance, the schoolhouse is divided, and mixing of the two groups does not occur. When this situation occurs, program and teacher isolation are highly likely. In addition, any collaborative efforts between teachers will be hindered, and teachers who attempt inclusive practices are often professionally challenged (Friend & Cook, 2007; Senge et al., 2000). With the establishment of co-teaching teams and inclusive environments, a classroom learning community is created with a natural support system for all students to feel a sense of belonging (Pugach & Johnson, 2002). It is important to understand that school culture influences

the use of inclusion and success of the co-teaching teams, and creates conditions for positive or negative academic growth for all students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to describe how the school and classroom cultures affect practices of inclusion for students with disabilities. In addition, this study will describe how the inclusionary practice of co-teaching, and its use of co-planning and co-implementation for providing appropriate services within the least restrictive environment, is influenced by the school culture.

Research Questions

1. How does the staff at the elementary school level perceive the school's culture and the culture's impact on practices of inclusion for students with disabilities?
2. How does the staff at the elementary school level perceive the impact that the school's culture has on the co-planning part of co-teaching?

   2a. Why are some practices used by general education and special education teachers in co-planning perceived as effective or not effective?
3. How does the staff at the elementary school level perceive the impact that the school's culture has on the co-implementation part of co-teaching?

   3a. Why are some practices used by general education and special education teachers in co-implementation perceived as effective or not effective?

Design and Method

For this study, a qualitative multicase study design will be used as it gives one the opportunity to collect data at various levels (i.e., school and classroom) that will result in insights from key stakeholders about perceptions of school and classroom cultures and practices of

inclusion for students with disabilities (Yin, 2009). These data will also be able to provide information for comparison of similar characteristics and identification of similarities in practices regarding how school culture influences inclusion practices for students with disabilities. With the use of a qualitative design, case study methodology can be used to capture both expected and unexpected perspectives and information such as Pickard (2009) was able to accomplish in his study.

This qualitative case study research will focus on the school and classroom cultures and how they affect practices of inclusion for students with high incidence disabilities in grades three, four, and five. The practice of co-teaching and the use of co-planning and co-implementation will be part of the focus. Inclusion will be viewed through the constructivist paradigm (Lincoln, 2005, in Paul). Through this lens, it will be possible to develop an understanding of unseen human meaning-making forces which build on one another and help one to understand each school community and its impact on inclusion of students with disabilities (*ibid*). Data will be analyzed through the use of interpretational analysis. Finally, a conceptual framework of collaborative practices will be used to help identify possible links between culture and practices for inclusion.

Summary

In summary, school and classroom cultures affect practices for inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education environment. Public policy supports inclusion of students with disabilities in the LRE (IDEA 1990, 1997, 2004). The school leadership team is the common variable in determining whether the school staff will become either resisters or risk takers (Friend & Cook, 1992). Co-teaching is a model for inclusion that serves as an alternative to placement in a more restrictive environment (Cook & Friend, 1995; Nararian, 2010).

Practices used by teachers during co-planning and co-implementation for co-teaching are effective or not effective for developing and implementing instruction for students with disabilities. These components continually work together to create the learning environment and culture in schools. The resulting environment makes a difference in whether staff and all students will either prosper or fail in their quest for educational excellence.

Definition of Terms

Co-implementation. Execution of a plan for teaching a concept with another individual using the model of co-teaching (Friend, 2008).

Co-planning. Multi-disciplinary planning between two teachers for the implementation of a lesson during co-teaching (Walther-Thomas, Bryant, & Land, 1996).

Co-teaching. Cook and Friend (1995) reference this term as an option for service delivery for students with disabilities whereby a general educator and a special educator deliver substantive instruction to a diverse or blended group in a single physical space.

General education. The program for students without disabilities housed within a school environment for academic instruction and socialization (Bauwens & Hourcade, 1995).

High incidence disabilities. For this study, the students known to have diagnoses of specific learning disabilities (SLD), emotional disabilities (ED), and other health impairments (OHI; Turnbull et al., 2013).

Inclusion. A belief system or philosophy that guides all the practices in a specific school (Friend, 2008). It is also a movement in education which supports students with disabilities in the general education classroom for academic instruction (Bauwens & Hourcade, 1995, p. xiii).

Least restrictive environment. A student with a disability has the opportunity to be educated with students without disabilities to the greatest extent appropriate (IDEA, 1990).

Power entities. Positive and negative written impressions by focus group participants within a short time limit (Welch, 2000).

Resisters. Those persons who refuse to accept or comply with change (Friend & Cook, 1992).

Risk takers. Change agents that assist individuals in accepting and supporting a different mindset (Friend & Cook, 1992).

School culture. A term used in reference to the norms, values, and routines of the school that are evidenced in the physical design and implementation of school processes (Horner et al., 2009). Examples of characteristics of a positive school culture include high morale, teamwork, risk-taking, and focused goals (Shachar, Gavin, & Shlomo, 2010).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Conceptual Framework

The beliefs of Villa, Thousand, and Nevin (2004) regarding co-teaching include (1) agreement to use a common conceptual framework, language, and a set of interpersonal skills and (2) facilitation of a collaborative culture. Through these two beliefs, a common language with shared meaning develops, and teachers bring conscious thought to their unconscious beliefs. As a result, general education and special education teachers move away from being isolated practitioners and move toward meeting the needs of a diverse student body in inclusionary settings (Villa et al., 2004). These actions create a relationship between the organization's structure and culture which allows both to share common characteristics. Very few studies analyze this complex relationship or demonstrate how changes in one area reflect and reinforce changes in the other. In other words, these two coordinates co-evolve as each one shapes and is shaped by the other (Bate, Khan, & Pye, 2000). Figure 1 provides a graphic representation of design and development of the conceptual coordinates of structure and culture.

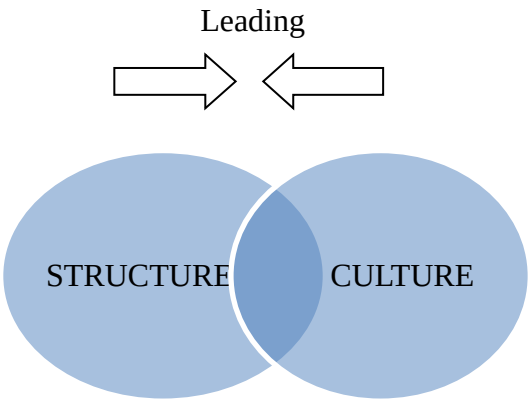

Figure 1. Graphic representation of the conceptual coordinates of structure and culture. Adapted from "Towards a Culturally Sensitive Approach to Organization Structuring: Where Organization Design Meets Organization Development," by P. Bate, R. Kahn, and A. Pye, 2000, *Organization Science, 11*(2), p. 198.

The interaction of the school and classroom structures and cultures determine whether inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education environment should be included in the provision of special education services. Friend (2008) looks at the use of co-teaching with use of co-planning and co-implementation practices. Friend (2008) elaborates on co-planning for instructional practices to include the (1) curriculum content and (2) learning environment. The co-implementation practices include (1) ways teachers deliver instruction, (2) opportunities for students to learn concepts and skills, and (3) ways the general education teacher and the special education teacher work together (Friend, 2008). This information from Friend (2008) in conjunction with the beliefs of Villa, Thousand, and Nevin (2004) influences the creation of a conceptual framework for this study in terms of identification of how culture and inclusion practices work together to impact delivery of special education services for students with high incidence disabilities. This conceptual framework is reflected in Figure 2. Figure 2 will be used to help identify evidence of a relationship between the district's mission, school and classroom

cultures, and inclusion practices for students with disabilities with emphasis on co-planning and co-implementation in co-teaching.

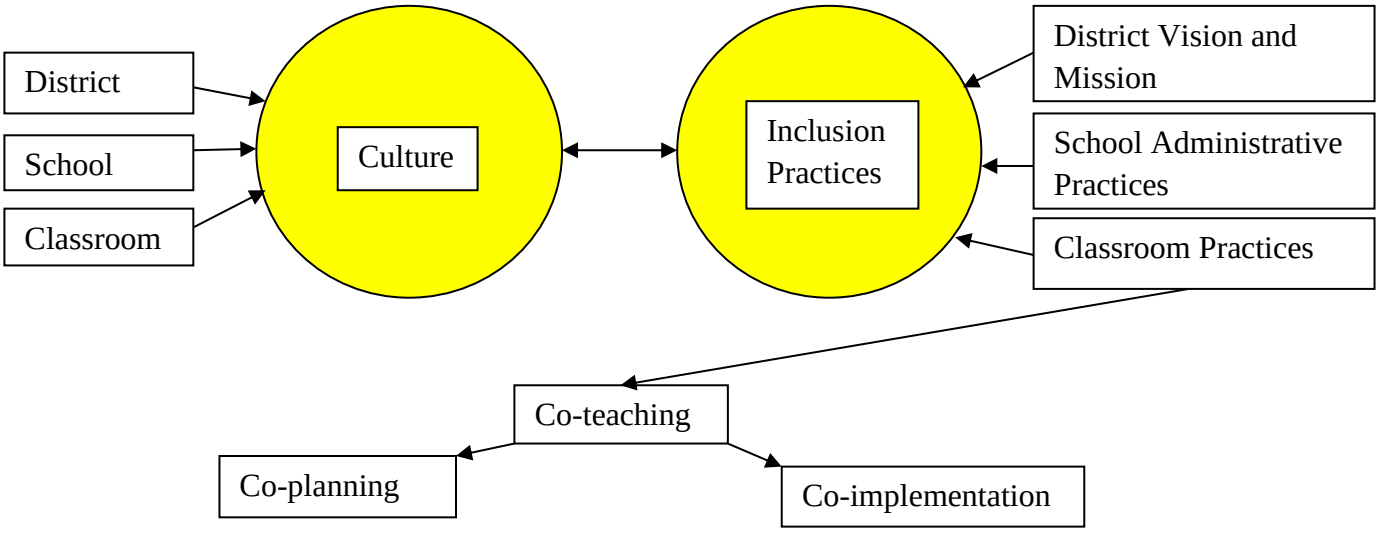

Figure 2. Conceptual framework for culture, structure, and collaborative practices in co-teaching created by merging the concepts from *Co-teach! A handbook for creating and sustaining effective classroom partnerships in inclusive schools,* by M. Friend, 2008 and *A guide to co-teaching: Practical tips for facilitating student learning,* by R. A. Villa, J. S. Thousand, and A. I. Nevin, 2004.

School Culture

School culture consists of norms, values, routines, beliefs, traditions, perceptions, emotions, and attitudes. These traits are reflected in the school's physical design and implementation of processes (Casey, et al., 1995; Handy, 1993; Horner et al., 2009; Sahin, 2004; Schein, 2004; Siehl & Martin, 1990). When members of the school staff spend time together in a professional capacity, they develop a set of common expectations, which in turn, builds a common school culture and demonstrates a collective personality of the organization. In order for the members of this group to remain in good standing with others, they must abide by these

common expectations. This creates a value system held by all members and results in an increase in the processes and effectiveness of the system (Gruenert, 2008; Siehl & Martin, 1990).

Characteristics found in a positive school culture include positive staff attitude and high morale, teamwork and sharing of responsibilities, safe physical environment, high expectations for students and teachers, clear and effective communications, encouragement and recognition of achievement, professional relationships, opportunities for shared activities and community interaction, encouragement of risk-taking, focused goals, and job satisfaction among staff (Canizo, 2002; Casey et al., 1995; Shachar, Gavin, & Shlomo, 2010). A positive and accepting school and classroom culture is a result of the reciprocal learning processes that enable participants to construct meaning of a shared purpose or goal. This positive and accepting environment also provides opportunities for academic and social success for all students and teachers, which has a powerful effect on the school community (Horner et al., 2009; Lambert et al., 1995; Unutkan, 1995). A strong cultured organization has a positive influence over its staff and experiences minimum negative conflicts (Unutkan, 1995). The staff is willing to become risk takers through teamwork due to a balance between authority and autonomy and competition and cooperation (Sisman, 1994).

Constructivist leadership in schools is responsible for the redistribution of authority which creates broad-based participation of staff (Lambert et al., 1995). Constructivist leaders mobilize staff in the organization to become adaptive, do not put pressure or time limits on teachers, and do not use a top-down management approach (Allan, 2003; Hadjithoma-Garstka, 2011). In this environment, staff members become a professional learning community with a focus on innovation (Lambert, 1998; Sahin, 2011). In turn, they develop a culture of inquiry with improvements based on reflecting, questioning, gathering evidence, and planning (Lambert,

1998). A constructivist institution uses collective responsibility to create a collaborative working school culture which is able to solve problems and sustain improvements (Campo, 1993; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992; Lambert, 1998; Sahin, 2011; Sergiovanni, 2005; Waldron & McLeskey, 2010).

Collaborative school cultures are considered to be the best learning environments for students and teachers (Gruenert, 2005; Waldron & McLeskey, 2010). The collaborative institution has the potential to affect practices of staff members with the possibility of including students with disabilities in all aspects of the school environment. Inclusion and school culture must converge in order for students with disabilities to perceive themselves as integral members of the school environment. With risk takers at the helm who provide support for inclusion, the school culture has the potential to embrace students with disabilities (Friend & Cook, 1992). When a collaborative and supportive school culture is present, teachers support learning new skills, collecting data, and sharing information with others. These human endeavors have meanings that create stability and predictability for the school and the people within (Deal, 1993; Horn-Hasley, 2007; Lima, 2006; Pawlas, 1997). In order for acceptance and practice of collaborative school cultures to become the norm, workplace socialization for teachers is required (Young, 2008). Through this effort, the school staff will be given an opportunity to understand the need for adjustment in their thinking to include students with disabilities in the general education classroom (*ibid*).

All school staff members are socialized through life experiences, professional training, and personal philosophies about how schools should be structured, which often have not included students with disabilities in the general education environment (Young, 2008). In the schools, it is through apprenticeship and school culture that socialization for inclusive practices

can occur for the school staff (Zeichner & Gore, 1990). The creation of a learning organization that educates and promotes programs for change will alter the relationships between staff and can positively affect school culture, resulting in a move away from routine rituals to opportunities for growing and changing (Sarason, 1996; Sergiovanni, 2005; Taylor, Goeke, Klein, Onore, & Geist, 2011). A positive change would support inclusion of students with disabilities by all staff in every aspect of the school environment.

In this literature review, no studies were identified that examined the influence of school culture on inclusion of students with disabilities through the service delivery option of co-teaching. Therefore, a search for other studies of the construct of school culture and other variables was conducted. Three studies were identified.

In the first study, conducted by Shachar et al. (2010), the perceptions of the schools' organizational cultures were identified through comparison of the relationship between administrators and teachers in two schools. By nature, educational systems are hierarchical. A school administrator is subordinate to the district authorities, and teachers are subordinate to the school administrator. It is the school administrator as the change agent who chooses to encourage teachers to initiate comprehensive changes in the school environment or serves as the resister who chooses the status quo (Shachar et al., 2010). Since schools function according to routine, complexity of the relationships between the teachers, administrators, and the district need to be considered before change is initiated (Murphy & Louis, 1999; Weick & Quinn, 1999). Any school change is intended to improve organizational structure and culture resulting in academic improvement for students (Gitlin & Margonis, 1995). The results of this study demonstrated that district policy affects schools and shapes school administrators' and classroom teachers' professional behaviors. Changes that became a part of the routine in the school culture

were a result of administrators who supported change and encouraged teachers in making school improvements. This was acknowledged through teachers' perceptions of the school's organizational culture and instructional methods used in the school. Administrators who resisted attempted changes did not experience changes in the organizational culture of the school or instructional methods as perceived by the teachers (Shachar et al., 2009).

The second study was a literature review by Fallon, O'Keeffe, and Sugai (2010). This literature review attempted to identify research-based studies that examined the construct of school culture and the choice for behavior management techniques to enhance implementation of school-wide positive behavior supports (SWPBS). Within the 28 articles chosen for inclusion, culture was defined in a variety of ways. Throughout the articles, it was perceived that contextual and cultural information needed to be considered in combination when making decisions for improvements of the staff's instructional and inclusionary practices. These decisions had the potential to positively impact the staff's behavior, resulting in successful academic and social outcomes for all students. Through use of SWPBS, the school environment became predictable, consistent, and positive for both teachers and students. With this technique, school and classroom expectations, as well as consequences for non-compliance, were visible and supported by the entire school community. The result was development of a school culture that took into consideration the diversity of its student body with emphasis on success for all staff and students (Fallon, O'Keeffe, and Sugai, 2010).

The third study focused on the construct of school culture and its role in integration of programs, such as Information and Communication Technologies (ICT; Tezci, 2011). ICT integration was dependent on the administrator's perception and vision and the school culture, which in turn influenced the teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and actions (Chai et al., 2009). It was

Tondeur, Valcke, and Van Braak (2008) who agreed that integration of a program, such as ICT, required a shared vision and a policy to be in place for acceptance of a programming change among the staff. This would include the staff at the district, school, and classroom levels. Results of this study indicated that teachers' perceptions of school culture regarding the integration of ICT was not supportive (Tezci, 2011). In addition, Inan and Lowther (2010) point out that experienced professionals in school environments had positive perceptions of school culture, whereas those professionals with less experience had negative perceptions of school culture. This was thought to be attributed to less experienced teachers having more experience with technology and their willingness to readily use it in the classroom. Thus, these less experienced individuals did not need the technical or motivational support for the use of ICT, and may potentially have believed that organizational support of this type was not received (Inan & Lowther, 2010; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2006).

History: Move Toward Inclusion

A movement toward inclusion of all students in general education settings began over two decades ago with a declaration by Madeleine Will (1986), Assistant Secretary of Education, from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. The movement supported shared responsibilities for change in service delivery models for students with disabilities. In 1986, Will declared support for the regular education initiative from the federal level when she spoke of the need for special education and general education programs to merge and provide support for all students who are at-risk for failure (Wang, Reynolds, & Walberg, 1986; Will, 1986). Will stated that special education needs "to establish a partnership with regular education to cooperatively assess the education needs of students with learning problems and to cooperatively develop effective strategies for meeting those needs" (Will, 1986). Following the

lead of Will, schools began to provide cooperative teaching models, where two or more teachers share instructional responsibility toward a common goal. In 1989, the seminal work of Bauwens, Hourcade, and Friend explained the rationale, benefits, and options for implementation of cooperative teaching and were the first to coin the term "co-teaching."

Public policy support for inclusion was evident in the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 1990 (IDEA; P.L. 105-17). The law governed how states and public agencies provided early intervention and related services to students with disabilities with emphasis on the least restrictive environment. As a result, public school students with disabilities were provided access to general education classrooms for academic instruction (Welch, Brownell, & Sheridan, 1999). Through the reauthorizations of IDEA in 1997 (P.L. 105-17) and 2004 (P.L. 108-446), emphasis was placed on improving education outcomes and accountability for all students with continued emphasis on use of the least restrictive environment. These laws also set higher expectations for students with disabilities, required the use of proven practices and materials, and put accountability measures in place for promoting more flexibility in schools (Damore & Murray, 2009). IDEA established increased expectations for school personnel by requiring that students with disabilities be successful in their learning as demonstrated by adequate yearly progress. These changes could have increased the interest in providing an education to students with disabilities in the general education classroom. They also could have increased the need to use collaborative strategies and the co-teaching model for service delivery. Passage of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2001 (P.L. 107-110) expanded the federal role in public education. This law put stressors on school personnel by requiring standards-based education reform and annual testing for all students, as well as teacher qualifications and funding changes (Silverstein, 2000). These two acts acted as a double-edged

sword. IDEA mandated that students with disabilities have the opportunity, through use of the least restrictive environment, to be educated with students without disabilities as appropriate. NCLB, however, may have caused public school systems to lose federal funding if their students with disabilities were not successful.

The actions of Will, the passage of IDEA, and the efforts of countless educational professionals identified the need for educating students with disabilities in general education classrooms with exposure to the general education curriculum while interacting with students without disabilities. Students with disabilities who received services in inclusion models of support have increased since the late 1980s and early 1990s. The numbers are expected to continue to increase in the future as predicted by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE, 1996). For example, in 1996, the U.S. Department of Education established that 73% of students with disabilities received a portion of their instructional program in inclusive settings (USDOE, 1996). This rate increased to 80% in 2003 (Damore & Murray, 2009; Salend & Garrick Duhaney, 1999; Walther-Thomas et al., 1996).

Inclusion models varied regarding how students with disabilities were provided special education services. Some models involved co-teaching, which was normally conducted in a single physical space of a general education classroom (Cook & Friend, 1995). The four components of co-teaching consisted of two educators, delivery of meaningful instruction, diverse groups of students, and common settings (Cook & Friend, 1995; Naraian, 2010). Morocco and Aguilar (2002) described six types of co-teaching models: alternate leading and supporting, station teaching, parallel teaching, flexible grouping, alternate teaching, and team teaching. Table 1 includes a detailed description of these professional co-teaching structures.

Table 1

Professional Co-teaching Structures - Morocco and Aguilar

Structure	Definition
Alternate leading and supporting	One teacher provides the main instruction and the other monitors and assists; then the teachers change roles. At any one time, the lead teacher may be the content or special education teacher.
Station teaching	Teachers set up tasks in different parts of the room and serve as the teacher/facilitator at different stations, each of which is relevant to the lesson. Heterogeneous groups of students may rotate among the stations.
Parallel teaching	Co-teachers plan a lesson together and then divide the class into two heterogeneous groups. They teach the same material, but may use different approaches.
Flexible grouping	Teachers divide students into subgroups based on their skill level or need for reteaching. One group may work independently.
Alternate teaching	One teacher teaches the large group, while the other teaches or reteaches content or skills to a small group. Teachers may regroup students and may alternate roles in teaching the large and small groups.
Team teaching	Two teachers provide instruction to the entire class. They hand off the instructional lead to one another across and within activities and may intervene during the other's conversation turn to explain or elaborate the content to students.

Note: From "Coteaching for Content Understanding: A Schoolwide Model," by C. C. Morocco and C. M. Aguilar, 2002, *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 13*(4), p. 317.

Friend (2008) also described six professional co-teaching structures. Four were similar to those of Morocco and Aguilar (2002) and included station teaching, parallel teaching, alternative teaching, and teaming. Two co-teaching structures were different and included one teach – one

observe and one teach – one assist. Friend (2008) described the one teach – one observe structure as a productive way for the team members to occasionally gather information about their students' learning needs. She described the one teach – one assist structure as a seldom-used model that has one teacher in a lead role while the other teacher is only functioning in a supportive, passive role. Table 2 includes a detailed description of Friend's professional co-teaching structures and the recommended frequency of use.

Table 2

Professional Co-teaching Structures - Friend

Structure	Definition	Frequency
One teach – one observe	One teacher manages the instruction of the entire student group while the other teacher systematically gathers data that both have decided are important.	Occasional
Station teaching	Teachers divide the content and students into three segments and groups. Students rotate stations while teachers work with two of the groups.	Frequent
Parallel teaching	Teachers divide students into two groups and lead the same instruction with both groups.	Frequent
Alternative teaching	First teacher manages the large group while second teacher works with a small group for a specific instructional purpose.	Occasional
Teaming	Both teachers are fully engaged in the delivery of the core instruction and share leading the instruction in front of the classroom.	Occasional
One teach – one assist	One teacher is in the lead role while the other teacher is functioning as a support to the classroom.	Seldom

Note: From "*Co-teach! A handbook for creating and sustaining effective classroom partnerships in inclusive schools"* by M. Friend, 2008, pp. 62-79.

In the co-teaching setting, the students with disabilities had an alternative to placement in more restrictive environments (Cook & Friend, 1995; Walsh, 2012). Use of the co-teaching model benefited all students, especially those students with disabilities, as it promoted inclusive

practices (Leonard & Leonard, 2003). Kilanowski-Press, Foote, and Rinaldo (2010) suggested that bringing services and supports to students with disabilities in the general education environment was the *hallmark* of inclusion. Bauwens, Hourcade, and Friend (1989) contrasted co-teaching and self-contained programming. They concluded that co-teaching was a better method in addressing the academic learning needs of students with disabilities than the inadequate and unsuccessful practice of self-contained programming. Benefits existed for teachers as they no longer had to work in isolation, and all students were able to gain an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of others. Within this structure, a transformative vision of teaching and learning between two teachers instead of just one appeared for every student in the co-taught classroom. A successful co-teaching team developed a relationship that functioned at a deeper level than one teacher could individually supply and provided services to all students both with and without disabilities (Pugach & Blanton, 2009).

Method of Research

Search Procedures

EBSCOhost was used to search 49 databases. An electronic Boolean/phrase search using the search terms and roots (coteaching or co-teaching or collaboration or co-planning) and (inclusi* or special educat*) and (elementary) was conducted through EBSCOhost and captured 588 scholarly peer-reviewed articles of relevance. After reviewing the abstracts, there were 23 articles that appeared to include information which would be applicable to this study. A second electronic search was conducted through Google Scholar using the words "coteaching" and "Jeanne Bauwens" or "Jack Hourcade" or "Marilyn Friend" or "Paul Gerber" or "Christine Walther-Thomas." These individuals were selected because they were the authors in seminal work about co-teaching (i.e., Bauwens et al., 1989) or were known by the present author to have

completed studies on co-teaching. A cross reference of the articles from EBSCOhost and Google Scholar yielded three additional articles for review.

Additionally, a hand search and ancestry search were conducted. The hand search consisted of seven journals. The names of the journals and years searched were: Exceptional Children (2012), Preventing School Failure (2009-2012), Remedial and Special Education (2011-2012), Teacher Education and Special Education (2011-2012), TEACHING Exceptional Children (2011-2012), The Journal of Learning Disabilities (2011-2012), and The Journal of Special Education (2011-2012). The ancestry search consisted of 11 reference lists and was employed in order to identify additional relevant research (e.g., Conderman & Hedin, 2012; Damore & Murray, 2009; Friend, 2000; Isherwood & Barger-Anderson, 2008; Karge, McClure, & Patton, 1995; Kilanowski-Press et al., 2010; Klingner et al., 1998; Mastropieri, et al., 2005; Murawski, 2012; Murawski & Hughes, 2009; Salend & Garrick Duhaney, 1999). This search yielded seven articles (e.g., Gerber & Popp, 2000; Murawski & Swanson, 2001; Pugach & Wesson, 1995; Salend et al., 1997; Scruggs et al., 2007; Trent et al., 2003; Zigmond, 1995).

A total of 81 articles were located. Eighteen articles (22.2%) with studies were deemed suitable for inclusion in this literature review. To be included in this review, the study had to meet four inclusion criteria. First, the co-teaching partnerships must include a special education teacher and a general education teacher. Second, students with high incidence disabilities, inclusive of specific learning disabilities (SLD), emotional disabilities (ED), other health impairments (OHI), "mild disabilities" or "student with a disability," were present in the teachers' classrooms. When the "mild disabilities" or "student with a disability" categories were listed, the researcher evaluated the article for the type of instruction, as well as how the students were included and performing to determine if the article met the criteria for inclusion. Third, the

students must have been in grades kindergarten through five. Fourth, the study had to include information about co-planning or co-implementation regarding co-teaching.

Sixty-three articles (77.8%) were excluded from the literature review. Studies were excluded if they (a) did not have a special education teacher and general education teacher working in a co-teaching capacity (e.g., Kaasila & Lauriala, 2010; Roth, Masciotra, & Boyd, 1999; Welch et al., 1999), (b) did not have students with SLD, ED, OHI, mild disabilities, or students with a disability (e.g., Antia, Stinson, & Gaustad, 2002; Kilanowski-Press et al., 2010; Schuster, Hemmeter, & Ault, 2001), (c) did not have students in grades kindergarten through five (e.g., Dieker, 2001; Karge, McClure, & Patton 1995; Morocco & Aguilar, 2002; Tobin, 2005), or (d) did not address co-planning or co-implementation regarding co-teaching (e.g., Kugelmass, 2001; Murawski & Swanson, 2001).

Data Extraction

Prior to initiating the data extractions, all research was vetted using research standards of the American Educational Research Association (AERA, 2006). Research articles were examined and evaluated in light of the inclusion criteria and whether they built cumulative and sound knowledge about the social process of co-teaching and its significance to individuals, groups, and the population as a whole. All of the articles considered for inclusion were scholarly peer-reviewed articles. After vetting, each potential study was then assessed for inclusion by this researcher. Studies were coded individually for pertinent information. This information included (a) participants and setting, (b) types of disabilities, (c) interventions or measurement tools and dependent measures or observed outcomes, (d) methodology, (e) data collection procedures, (f) data analysis procedures, (g) results of the study, and (h) co-planning or co-implementation with co-teaching.

Coding Variables

Descriptions of the coding variables follow. Participants included general education teachers and special education teachers involved in co-teaching, administrators, and students. The setting included classroom grades kindergarten through five or elementary schools. Types of student disabilities included SLD, ED, OHI, mild disabilities, or SWD. In some studies, students with other disability labels were included provided the disabilities listed above were also included. Interventions or independent variables (IV) and dependent measures or dependent variables (DV) within these articles were manipulated or used to find information and what was measured as the result, respectively. Articles that did not include an IV were coded on measurement tools, which were used to obtain the outcome. The methodology was the research design which included quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods design. Data collection procedures described how the information was gathered. Data analysis procedures described types of statistical tests and numerical comparisons used for quantitative studies and types of analyses used for qualitative studies. Results of the study summarized the study's findings. The details coded included categories, themes, philosophies, beliefs, perceptions, benefits, problems, correlations, statistical results, interrater reliability, adaptations, accommodations, modifications, strategies, nature of the co-teaching relationship, phases of the model, role delineations, teaching styles, student and teacher growth, recommendations, co-planning and co-implementation. In general, the findings captured how co-teachers co-plan and co-implement instruction for all students.

Synthesis of Empirical Research

Overview of Literature Review

For this literature review, "co-teaching" refers to the collaboration between a general education teacher and a special education teacher working with students with high incidence disabilities in educationally integrated settings (Bauwens & Hourcade, 1991). The roles of the two co-teachers vary within classrooms and across co-teaching teams. These roles change according to the kinds of instruction provided in each classroom at a given moment. Roles are hierarchical in structure regarding the involvement of the special education teacher and include alternate leading and supporting, station teaching, parallel teaching, flexible grouping, alternate teaching, and team teaching. The co-teaching designs blend and integrate as they include several different types of instruction throughout a given lesson (Morocco & Aguilar, 2002). In this review, the term high incidence disabilities includes those students who have specific learning disabilities (SLD), emotional disabilities (ED), other health impairments (OHI), "mild disabilities," or "student with a disability." The final two terms of "mild disabilities" and "student with a disability" are acceptable when context clues suggest that the students did not have a low incidence, severe disability (e.g., significant Intellectual Disability).

Extensive research has been conducted over the past 20 years on inclusion and co-teaching. The majority of the research, (i.e., approximately 80%), was qualitative and involved teachers', administrators', and students' perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, experiences, roles, and relationships (e.g., Gerber & Popp, 2000; Pugach & Wesson, 1995; Salend et al., 1997; Walther-Thomas, 1997) . Co-teaching was found to be a widespread practice, but there were no data that specified the frequency at which it occurred.

Murawksi and Swanson (2001) conducted a meta-analysis of quantitative research on co-teaching. They examined 89 articles published from 1989 to 1999. This analysis revealed that only six studies reported sufficient data to calculate effect sizes for co-teaching's impact on student outcomes. The effect sizes ranged from 0.08 to 0.95 and averaged 0.40. The 0.40 average indicated that co-teaching had a moderate effect on student outcomes. The researchers stated that the synthesized sample was too small to draw firm conclusions. Interestingly, only one of the studies in this meta-analysis focused on social outcomes, which in this study involved measures of attitudes (Vaughn, Elbaum, Schumm, & Hughes, 1998).

Scruggs, Mastropieri, and McDuffie (2007) conducted a metasynthesis of qualitative research on co-teaching. Thirty-two studies of co-teaching in inclusive classrooms were examined and evaluated. Four general conclusions were drawn. First, there were social and academic benefits to students and professional development benefits for teachers involved in co-teaching. Second, conditions associated with positive outcomes included adequate training for teachers in co-teaching, sufficient planning time during school hours, compatibility of co-teaching partners, and appropriate student skill levels for classroom challenges. Third, "one teach - one assist" was the most prevalent co-teaching model implemented. In this model, the special education teacher often played a subordinate role to the general education teacher and was used solely as a non-teaching support for the classroom. Fourth, large group instruction was typical where the general education teacher served as the lead teacher, little individualization of instruction occurred, and the special education teacher supported the students with disabilities and any at-risk students. The metasynthesis revealed that co-teaching, as defined above, was often not taking place in the large group instruction model.

Subsequent reviews related to co-teaching focused on the components needed for co-taught classrooms, as well as the pros and cons of inclusion (Gately & Gately, 2001; Klingner, Vaughn, Hughes, Schumm, & Elbaum, 1998). Gately and Gately (2001) listed eight components needed for the co-teaching relationship. These components included interpersonal communication, physical arrangement, familiarity with the curriculum, curriculum goals and modifications, instructional planning, instructional presentation, classroom management, and assessment. In addition, Gately and Gately (2001) listed pros as increased diversity of general education classrooms and the opportunity for professionals to work together in collaborative partnerships. Klingner et al. (1998) listed cons for full inclusion. These included the support from the special educator as not being sufficient to meet the needs of the students with disabilities and some students not making any progress with this model.

In most of the literature, the assumption was made that collaboration led to improved student academic achievement. However, if undifferentiated large group instruction remained the norm in the co-taught classroom as was shown in Scruggs et al., 2007, then students with high incidence disabilities may not necessarily achieve academic success, even with special education support (Baker & Zigmond, 1990; Fuchs, Fuchs, & Fernstrom, 1993; Larrivee, 1986; Lingo, Barton-Arwood, & Jolivette, 2001; McIntosh, Vaughn, Schumm, Haager, & Lee, 1993; Zigmond et al., 1995).

It was apparent in the literature that in order to have successful co-teaching environments, support was needed at the district, school, and classroom levels (Walsh, 2012). When the culture of all three levels embraced co-teaching as the method of service delivery, there was an opportunity for general education teachers to receive direct learning support regarding strategies and instructional differentiation from the special educator. This support provided the general

educators with knowledge of how to meet the needs of the variety of learning styles of students in the classroom. Likewise, special education teachers were provided with the opportunity to learn the content of the courses they were required to teach, since the majority of their training had focused on learning strategies. The result of strong collaborative support was often continuous improvement in teaching skills and high student achievement on class assessments as well as high-stakes assessments (Walsh, 2012).

Co-planning and co-implementation promoted successful co-teaching as these two practices helped to create and sustain successful inclusion programs (Mastropieri et al., 2005). The co-planning and co-implementation components provided the opportunity for the teachers to spend time together, often changing their mindsets (Smith, 2002). This change of mindset was lateral thinking, which was the ability to change one's perspective or point of view completely (*ibid*). Lateral thinkers were effective and efficient as they used the best parts of current knowledge of how things were done and created new ideas that were distinct and different (*ibid*). These lateral thinkers made the changes that were overall improvements but required time, effort, and resources. The communication between co-teachers was the best way for teacher change to occur regarding co-teaching, inclusive of co-planning and co-implementation. Communication was the critical component that influenced the success or failure for inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education environment (Gallagher, 1998; Gersten, Keating, & Irvin, 1995; Mastropieri et al., 2005; Mesler Parise & Spillane, 2010; Silliman, Ford, Beasman, & Evans, 1999; Smith, 2002; Stone, 1996).

No studies had synthesized practices that co-teachers used to complete the tasks of co-planning and co-implementing instruction. In addition, no reviews had synthesized information on the effectiveness or perceived effectiveness of the practices. With this knowledge, a better

understanding and improvement of co-teaching practices could be facilitated (Mastropieri et al., 2005).

This literature review involved a systematic analysis of studies which focused on the practices that co-teachers find effective for co-planning and co-implementing instruction. The search included co-teachers working with students with high incidence disabilities in grades kindergarten through five. The purpose of this literature review, therefore, was to synthesize and evaluate data collected on co-teaching practices and their effectiveness for co-teachers in these two areas.

Synthesis of Studies

There were a total of 18 studies included in this review that met the criteria for inclusion. These studies included quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods studies. Only one of the quantitative studies involved an experimental manipulation with a control group and would be considered quasi-experimental (Magiera & Zigmond, 2005). Another quantitative study was non-experimental and used surveys, classroom observations, and review of student records to collect the data (Hang & Rabren, 2009). There were three mixed methods studies that combined non-experimental posttest only and case studies. These three mixed methods used surveys, semi-structured interviews, and observations with protocols to obtain data (Austin, 2001; Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Daane, Beirne-Smith, & Latham, 2000). A fourth mixed methods study was a formative evaluation and used teacher planning logs, teacher journals, student work samples, and focus group interviews to collect data (Welch, 2000). Ten of the qualitative studies were case studies only and incorporated interviews, observations, and review of records and document collection to obtain data (Baker, 1995; Magiera et al., 2006; Mastropieri et al., 2005; Nevin, Cramer, Voight, & Salazar, 2008; Phillips & Sapona, 1995; Pugach & Wesson, 1995; Salend et

al., 1997; Trent et al., 2003; Walther-Thomas, 1997; Zigmond, 1995). One of the two remaining qualitative studies combined case studies with focus groups and used surveys, interviews, and observations to collect data (Pickard, 2009). The other qualitative study that combined a case study and focus group used individual and focus group interviews (Gerber & Popp, 2000). All of these 18 studies sought some information in a direct way (e.g., classroom observations, interviews). None of the studies were completed without some direct contact.

Elementary schools consisted of 66.7 % of the studies while 5.6% of the studies involved elementary and middle schools. Studies that involved elementary, middle, and high schools comprised 27.8% of the total studies. For the studies that involved grades other than elementary, the information about elementary was reported separately and included in the results.

In the 13 studies that included information about geographic location, 10 of the states were from the eastern part of the United States, while three of the states were from the Midwest. There were no studies from the western part of the United States. Three of the studies were from urban areas, two of the studies were from suburban areas, and six of the studies were from rural areas. These counts suggest that studies on co-teaching were primarily being conducted in the eastern part of the United States and in rural areas.

Each section of the co-teaching research that was thought to contribute to finding a gap in the literature was addressed. The results can be found in the following sections of this document: (1) participants and settings, (2) disabilities, (3) measurement tools and data collection procedures, (4) observed outcomes, (5) methodology, (6) data analysis, (7) results, (8) co-planning, and (9) co-implementation.

Participants and Settings. All studies included participants and setting variables which were merged for discussion. Table 3 described the participants in the 18 studies. It was

important to have the general education teachers and special education teachers as teacher participants in each study, because the co-teaching model includes both of these. In addition to co-teaching pairs, some studies included other participants (i.e., nine studies included administrators, seven studies included students with disabilities, three studies included parents, two studies included related service personnel, and two studies included students without disabilities).

Table 3

Participants

Citations	AD	GET	SET	SWD	SWOD	RSP	P
Austin (2001)	-	X	X	-	-	-	-
Baker (1995)	X	X	X	X	-	-	X
Cramer & Nevin (2006)	-	X	X	-	-	-	-
Daane et al. (2000)	X	X	X	-	-	-	-
Gerber & Popp (2000)	X	X	X	X	X	-	X
Hang & Rabren (2009)	-	X	X	X	-	-	-
Magiera et al. (2006)	X	X	X	-	-	X	-
Magiera & Zigmond (2005)	-	X	X	X	-	-	-
Mastropieri et al. (2005)	-	X	X	X	X	-	-
Nevin et al. (2008)	-	X	X	X	X	X	-
Phillips & Sapona (1995)	-	X	X	-	-	-	-
Pickard (2009)	X	X	X	-	-	-	-
Pugach & Wesson (1995)	-	X	X	X	X	-	-
Salend et al. (1997)	X	X	X	-	-	-	-
Trent et al. (2003)	X	X	X	-	-	-	-
Walther-Thomas (1997)	X	X	X	-	-	-	-
Welch (2000)	-	X	X	X	-	-	-
Zigmond (1995)	X	X	X	X	-	-	X

Notes: AD - Administrators; GET - General Education Teacher; SET - Special Education Teacher; SWD - Student with a Disability; SWOD - Student without a Disability; RSP - Related Service Personnel; P - Parent.

Additional information about the participants included four studies that identified the gender of the teachers or students. Pugach and Wesson (1995) had one female and two male teachers; Hang and Rabren (2009) had seven male and 38 female teachers; Cramer and Nevin (2006) had five male and 41 female teachers; and Nevin et al. (2008) had 10 male and 14 female

students. Three studies gave the ethnicities of the teachers or students. Cramer and Nevin (2006) had five African American, 16 Hispanic, and 12 Caucasian teachers; Hang and Rabren (2009) had 22 Caucasian and 36 African American students; and Nevin et al. (2008) had three African American and 21 Hispanic students. It was important to address participants and settings because they illustrated the variety of the participants and settings used in the 18 studies.

The settings inclusive of elementary school, middle school, high school and rural, urban, suburban with emphasis on grades kindergarten through five for the 18 studies were described in Table 4. Geographic locations of the 18 studies were described in Table 5.

Table 4

Settings

Citations	EL	MS	HS	R	U	S
Austin (2001)	X	X	X	-	-	-
Baker (1995)	X	-	-	-	-	-
Cramer & Nevin (2006)	X	X	X	-	X	-
Daane et al. (2000)	X	-	-	X	X	-
Gerber & Popp (2000)	X	X	X	-	-	-
Hang & Rabren (2009)	X	X	X	-	-	-
Magiera et al. (2006)	X	-	-	-	X	-
Magiera & Zigmond (2005)	X	X	-	X	X	-
Mastropieri et al. (2005)	X	X	X	-	-	-
Nevin et al. (2008)	X	-	-	-	-	-
Phillips & Sapona (1995)	X	-	-	X	-	X
Pickard (2009)	X	-	-	X	-	-
Pugach & Wesson (1995)	X	-	-	-	X	-
Salend et al. (1997)	X	-	-	X	-	-
Trent et al. (2003)	X	-	-	-	-	-
Walther-Thomas (1997)	X	X	-	-	-	-
Welch (2000)	X	-	-	-	-	X
Zigmond (1995)	X	-	-	X	-	-

Notes: El - Elementary; MS - Middle School; HS - High School; R - Rural; U - Urban; S - Suburban.

Table 5

Geographic Locations

Citations	FL	KY	NJ	NY	NC	PA	VA	MW	SE
Austin (2001)	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
Baker (1995)	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-
Cramer & Nevin (2006)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
Daane et al. (2000)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
Gerber & Popp (2000)	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-
Hang & Rabren (2009)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
Magiera et al. (2006)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Magiera & Zigmond (2005)	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-
Mastropieri et al. (2005)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nevin et al. (2008)	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Phillips & Sapona (1995)	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pickard (2009)	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-
Pugach & Wesson (1995)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-
Salend et al. (1997)	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-
Trent et al. (2003)	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-
Walther-Thomas (1997)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Welch (2000)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-
Zigmond (1995)	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-

Notes: FL - Florida; KY - Kentucky; NJ - New Jersey; NY - New York; NC - North Carolina; PA - Pennsylvania ; VA - Virginia; MW - Midwest; SE - Southeast.

Disabilities. One of the inclusion criteria was students with high incidence disabilities. These disabilities consisted of specific learning disabilities (SLD), emotional disabilities (ED), other health impairments (OHI), mild disabilities, and student with a disability. However, there were 13 disability labels used in the 18 studies, which consisted of five high incidence disability labels and nine additional disability labels. The studies that acknowledged the additional nine disability labels also included students with high incidence disabilities, which allowed for the studies to be included in this literature review. Table 6 described the disability labels for students included in the 18 studies. It was important to address disabilities because it illustrated that every study included students with high incidence disabilities even though some studies included other types of students with disabilities.

Table 6

Disabilities

Citations	DD	ED	HI	ID	OHI	OI	MD	SLI	SLD	TBI	SWD
Austin (2001)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-
Baker (1995)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-
Cramer & Nevin (2006)	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	-
Daane et al. (2000)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
Gerber & Popp (2000)	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-
Hang & Rabren (2009)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
Magiera et al. (2006)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
Magiera & Zigmond (2005)	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	-
Mastropieri et al. (2005)	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-
Nevin et al. (2008)	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	X	X	-	-
Phillips & Sapona (1995)	-	X	-	X	-	-	X	-	X	-	-
Pickard (2009)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
Pugach & Wesson (1995)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-
Salend et al. (1997)	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	X	X	X	-
Trent et al. (2003)	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	-
Walther-Thomas (1997)	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-
Welch (2000)	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-
Zigmond (1995)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-

Notes: DD - Developmental Delay; ED – Emotional Disability; HI – Hearing Impairment; ID – Intellectual Disability (includes MR – Mental Retardation, MMD – Mild Mental Disabilities); OHI – Other Health Impairment; OI – Orthopedic Impairment ; MD – Multiple Disabilities; SLI – Speech Language Impairment; SLD – Specific Learning Disability; TBI – Traumatic Brain Injury; SWD – Student with a Disability.

Measurement Tools and Data Collection Procedures. After extraction of information about these two variables, they appeared to be similar and therefore were merged for discussion. There were seven survey instruments, which included *Teacher's Perspective Survey* (Hang & Rabren, 2009), *Student's Perspective Survey* (*ibid*), *Inclusion Team Teaching Analysis* (Pickard, 2009), *Co-Teaching Rubric* (*ibid*), *The Perceptions of Co-Teaching Survey* (Austin, 2001), *Co-Teacher Relationship Scale* (Cramer & Nevin, 2006), and *Are We Really Co-Teachers Scale* (*ibid*). Daane et al. (2000) included a survey that was associated with the regular education initiative without a specific title of the survey. A questionnaire that was not described was

administered by Magiera et al. (2006) to all staff at the school and not solely the teachers associated with inclusion.

Twelve out of the 18 studies used interviews. Interviews were conducted using the formats of one-on-one, semi-structured, open-ended, focus groups, focus groups with use of power entities, and informal contacts. Table 7 described the formats used by each of the studies.

Table 7

Interview Formats

Citations	1:1	SS	OE	FG	FG/PE	IC
Austin (2001)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Baker (1995)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cramer & Nevin (2006)	-	X	-	-	-	-
Daane et al. (2000)	-	X	-	-	-	-
Gerber & Popp (2000)	X	-	-	X	-	-
Hang & Rabren (2009)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Magiera et al. (2006)	-	X	-	-	-	-
Magiera & Zigmond (2005)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mastropieri et al. (2005)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nevin et al. (2008)	-	X	-	-	-	-
Phillips & Sapona (1995)	-	X	-	-	-	-
Pickard (2009)	-	X	-	X	-	-
Pugach & Wesson (1995)	-	X	X	-	-	-
Salend et al. (1997)	-	-	-	X	-	-
Trent et al. (2003)	-	X	X	-	-	-
Walther-Thomas (1997)	-	X	-	-	-	X
Welch (2000)	-	-	-	X	X	-
Zigmond (1995)	-	-	-	-	-	-

Notes: 1:1 – One-on-one; SS – Semi-structured; OE – Open-ended; FG – Focus Groups; FG/PE – Focus Groups with use of Power Entities; IC – Informal Contacts

Observations were used to collect data. Seven studies used non-scripted observations (i.e., did not use a protocol or specific questions). Study one, Baker (1995) searched for data that described the context of inclusion, model of inclusion, role of the special education teacher in co-teaching, and the students' educational experiences. Study two, Mastropieri et al. (2005) searched for data that identified research-based instructional materials and practices to increase the performance of students with disabilities. Study three, Pickard (2009) searched for data that

described the academic culture of the classrooms and the functionality of the inclusion teams. Study four, Trent et al. (2003) searched for data that described the benefits for teachers and external forces that influenced implementation. Study five, Walther-Thomas (1997) searched for data that identified the emerging benefits and persistent problems encountered when developing and implementing inclusive education models. Study six, Zigmond (1995) searched for data that described the mainstreaming experiences of the students with a specific learning disability. Study seven, Nevin et al. (2008) searched for data through an observation, field notes, and videotapes that described the nature of instruction and teachers' experiences during the co-teaching lessons. An additional study performed an observation with a systematic time sampling procedure to collect data in order to describe the additive effect of the special education teacher on the instructional experiences of students with disabilities (Magiera & Zigmond, 2005).

Review of student records was another method used for collecting data. Baker (1995) and Zigmond (1995) reviewed student records to collect information on achievement levels, referral information, and Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals. Hang and Rabren (2009) reviewed student records to collect information on academic and behavioral performances from the prior year to the co-taught year. Nevin et al. (2008) reviewed student records to collect information on IEPs.

Four studies solicited school personnel to retrieve archival and document data as a method for data collection. Mastropieri et al. (2005) collected samples of class activities, homework assignments, tests, and exams. Trent et al. (2003) collected memos from central office staff, lesson plan sheets from teachers, strategy charts displayed in classrooms, student worksheets, and letters from parents. Walther-Thomas (1997) collected record keeping forms, lesson planning sheets, and staff development materials. Welch (2000) collected student work

samples and teacher planning logs. Another method used to collect data included journaling by co-teachers based upon what was happening in the classroom and co-teachers' individual views of the experience (Salend et al., 1997). It was important to address measurement tools and data collection procedures because they illustrated the instruments used and the data collection processes.

Observed Outcomes. Seven categorical divisions emerged with examination of the observed outcomes variable. These divisions included the state of current models and implementation, perceptions and attitudes, roles and relationships, benefits and problems, efficacy of co-teaching programs, recommendations for co-teaching programs, and classroom culture. There were 11 studies that described the state of current models and implementation with description of the context and model, as well as effective strategies that were valued and used (e.g., Austin, 2001; Baker, 1995; Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Magiera et al., 2006; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Nevin et al., 2008; Phillips & Sapona, 1995; Pickard, 2009; Trent et al., 2003; Welch, 2000; Zigmond, 1995).

Eight studies collected data on co-teachers' perceptions and attitudes regarding use of the co-teaching model (e.g., Austin, 2001; Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Daane, 2000; Hang & Rabren, 2009; Pickard, 2009; Pugach & Wesson, 1995; Salend et al., 1997; Welch, 2000). According to Cramer and Nevin (2006) and Salend et al. (1997), the positive attitudes of the general education and special education teachers attributed to co-teaching being successful for co-teachers, enjoyable and stimulating, and powerful for students. The co-taught classroom was perceived by the general education and special education teachers as a place where students with disabilities grew socially, received sufficient support, and were academically successful (Daane et al., 2000; Hang & Rabren, 2009; Pickard, 2009; Pugach & Wesson, 1995). The negative attitudes of the

general education and special education teachers and administrators were attributed to the perception of teachers' lack of preparedness to work with students with disabilities (Daane et al., 2000). Both co-teachers, however, agreed that general education teachers participated more than the special education teachers in the co-taught classroom (Austin, 2001). Lastly, general education and special education teachers stated that sufficient co-planning time was not available, which they believed hindered the growth of co-teachers and the growth of their co-taught classrooms (Hang & Rabren, 2009; Welch, 2000).

Roles and relationships were measured in three studies (e.g., Baker, 1995; Salend, et al., 1997; Welch, 2000). Baker (1995) and Salend et al. (1997) demonstrated the need for joint responsibility for instruction, accountability, and decision-making, which they believed resulted in enrichment of teaching and learning. The co-teachers met with success when they worked as a single unit and were compatible (Baker, 1995). If both co-teachers were not treated as equals, then a form of co-teaching was present that did not include co-planning or co-implementation and was not conducted in the true spirit of co-teaching (Welch, 2000).

Three studies measured benefits and problems (e.g., Mastropieri et al., 2005; Trent et al., 2003; Walther-Thomas, 1997). Measured benefits included instructional change, professional satisfaction and growth, and personal support for the co-teachers (Trent et al., 2003; Walther-Thomas, 1997). Students with disabilities experienced improved outcomes and were meeting with academic success in co-taught classrooms (Mastropieri et al., 2005; Trent et al., 2003). Problems commonly encountered in co-teaching arrangements consisted of co-teacher incompatibility, lack of communication, and lack of academic content knowledge (Mastropieri et al., 2005; Trent et al., 2003). There were further problems identified with scheduled planning time, student scheduling, caseload concerns, administrative support, staff development, high

stakes testing, and model sustainment (Mastropieri et al., 2005; Trent et al., 2003; Walther-Thomas, 1997).

One study measured co-teaching program efficacy. Hang and Rabren (2009) used paired-sample *t*-tests to determine a difference in outcomes for students with disabilities when comparing the prior year without co-teaching to the current year with co-teaching. Academics, discipline referral, and attendance records were also compared in this manner resulting in statistically significant differences. Students' National Curve Equivalents from before and after the use of co-teaching sessions were used to compare reading and math. The results were reading $t = 2.96$, $p < .01$ and math $t = 6.97$, $p < .001$. Researchers then compared discipline referrals and school attendance records before and after the use of co-teaching sessions resulting in $t = 2.715$, $p < .001$ and $t = 2.602$, $p < .05$ respectively. These comparisons demonstrated how the use of co-teaching was associated with improved academic and behavioral performance outcomes for students with disabilities.

One study measured data from co-teachers, administrators, students with disabilities, students without disabilities, and parents from both groups in the areas of general recommendations and training recommendations. After analysis of the data, Gerber and Popp (2000) made general recommendations and training recommendations based on these two clusters. The general recommendations consisted of delivery of services (e.g., defining collaboration, establishing limits, maintaining multiple service delivery options, ensuring program continuation), administrative issues (e.g., strategic scheduling, planning time, voluntary participation, program evaluation), and communication (e.g., informing parents, reporting on success). Training recommendations consisted of new personnel training (e.g., first-time collaborative teachers, new administrators), personnel indirectly involved in the co-teaching

process (e.g., general educators, guidance counselors), parent training, and the role of the university (e.g., preparing pre-service teachers, staff development with in-service teachers).

Culture was measured in one study. Pickard (2009) examined the academic culture of the co-taught classrooms and its impact on teachers. Use of the elements of collaboration made it difficult to determine the general education teacher from the special education teacher in the co-taught classrooms, and thus created a culture of a single unit and an opportunity for success. These seven categorical divisions of outcomes were the dependent variables measured in the studies. It was important to address the observed outcomes variable because this variable illustrated the studies that were similar in their quest for knowledge.

Methodology. There were two quantitative, twelve qualitative, and four mixed methods studies in this review. In the quantitative studies and quantitative portions of the mixed methods studies, four types of research designs were used. Three studies used non-experimental posttest only designs (e.g., Austin, 2001; Daane et al., 2000; Hang & Rabren, 2009). Two studies used pretest-posttest repeated measures design (e.g., Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Hang & Rabren, 2009). One study used quasi-experimental posttest only design (e.g., Magiera et al., 2006). One study used a formative evaluation (e.g., Welch, 2000).

In the qualitative studies and qualitative portions of the mixed methods studies, three research designs were used. Fourteen studies used case study design (e.g., Austin, 2001; Baker, 1995; Daane et al., 2000; Gerber & Popp, 2000; Magiera et al., 2006; Mastropieri et al., 2005; Nevin et al., 2008; Phillips & Sapona, 1995; Pickard, 2009; Pugach & Wesson, 1995; Salend et al., 1997; Trent et al., 2003; Walther-Thomas, 1997; Zigmond, 1995). Three studies used focus group design (e.g., Gerber & Popp, 2000; Pickard, 2009; Welch, 2000). One study used grounded theory design (e.g., Cramer & Nevin, 2006). It was important to address the

methodology variable because this variable illustrated how studies were similar in their quest for knowledge.

Data Analysis. The data were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative methods included (a) analysis of variance (Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Hang & Rabren, 2009), (b) *t*-test (Austin, 2001; Hang & Rabren, 2009; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005), (c) calculation of reliability (Magiera & Zigmond, 2005), (d) cross-tabulation using Wilcoxon's matched-pairs signed-ranks test (Austin, 2001), and (e) descriptive analysis with mean and standard deviation (Cramer & Nevin, 2006).

Qualitative methods included interpretational analysis (Baker, 1995; Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Daane et al., 2000; Gerber & Popp, 2000; Magiera et al., 2006; Nevin et al., 2008; Phillips & Sapona, 1995; Pickard, 2009; Pugach & Wesson, 1995; Salend et al., 1997; Walther-Thomas, 1997; Zigmond, 1995) and inductive analysis (Mastropieri et al., 2005; Welch, 2000). Six other qualitative methods included (a) themes (e.g., Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Magiera et al., 2006; Nevin et al., 2008; Phillips & Sapona, 1995; Pickard, 2009; Pugach & Wesson, 1995; Salend et al., 1997; Walther-Thomas, 1997), (b) forcefield group technique (e.g., Gerber & Popp, 2000), (c) constant comparative method (e.g., Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Nevin et al., 2008; Pugach & Wesson, 1995), (d) triangulation (e.g., Trent et al., 2003), (e) member checking (e.g., Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Trent et al., 2003) and (f) audit trail and documentation (e.g., Trent et al., 2003; Welch, 2000; Zigmond, 1995). It was important to address the data analysis variable because this variable illustrated examination of the co-teaching method quantitatively and qualitatively. In turn, it showed that the majority of investigations in this co-teaching review were qualitative.

Results.

Teachers. Cramer and Nevin (2006) demonstrated teachers' confidence ratings with regard to their years of experience in the co-teaching relationship as positive. Through the use of an analysis of variance, the *Co-Teacher Relationship Scale* showed a mean of 4.25 and a standard deviation of 0.81 for this one item out of 19 areas observed through the use of this scale. This was the only item that proved to be statistically significant. The *Are We Really Co-Teachers Scale* did not result in any items that were statistically significant when compared to the years of co-teaching experience. Results indicated that teachers perceived that their years of experience in the co-taught classroom increased their confidence as educators. Austin (2001) demonstrated, through the use of *The Perceptions of Co-Teaching Survey*, that there was a correlation between total years teaching for general education and special education co-teachers. The mean was 15.5 for the special education teachers as compared to the mean of 18.7 for the general education teachers and a $p = .017$ between the groups. These same teachers perceived that co-teaching contributed positively to the academic and social development of their students as demonstrated through use of the *Semi-Structured Interview: Perceptions of Co-Teaching.* Mastropieri et al., (2005) located variables that interacted strongly for positive co-teaching results. Their qualitative analysis resulted in three themes: academic content knowledge, high-stakes testing, and co-teacher compatibility.

Students. Hang and Rabren (2009) compared growth of students with disabilities in a co-taught classroom and a resource classroom using the *Teacher's Perspective Survey.* The difference was Chronbach's $\alpha = 0.77$. Nevin et al. (2008) compared growth of students when they looped to the next grade level and maintained the co-teaching environment over two years. Results showed both academic gains and social benefits. The students with disabilities had

changes in their developmental scores with the majority making adequate yearly progress in both reading and math. The students without disabilities chose to assist and model for the students with disabilities in the classroom and provided social benefits for them (e.g., positive peer relationships and peer support) which promoted understanding and acceptance.

Teachers and students. Hang and Rabren (2009) gathered data from the general education and special education co-teachers' and students' with disabilities about co-teaching using the *Teacher's Perspective Survey* and the *Student's Perspective Survey.* The results of these surveys demonstrated the participants' support for students with disabilities in this environment. Through the use of a one-way analysis of variance, the prospective differences among these three groups were compared resulting in a statistically significant area of *support for students.* The mean and standard deviations of the participants included the general education teachers' mean of 2.61 and standard deviation of 1.23, special education teachers' mean of 3.57 and standard deviation of 0.65, and students with disabilities' mean of 2.73 and standard deviation of 1.27. The final result was $F(2, 91) = 3.40$, $p = .04$, which demonstrated a perceived positive difference when using co-teaching to deliver services to students with disabilities as compared to not using co-teaching. Magiera and Zigmond (2005) used paired *t*-tests to contrast one-to-one academic interactions with students in co-taught classrooms and solo-taught classrooms. Through use of an observation protocol, the researchers determined that two out of 13 areas were significant. The first significant area was *general education teacher interaction* with a mean of 45.0 and a standard deviation of 13.39 in the co-taught class and a mean of 61.6 and a standard deviation of 10.98 in the solo-taught class. The *t* statistic for this area was 4.4. A second area was *instruction to the student* with a mean of 2.2 and a standard deviation of 1.72 in the co-taught class and a mean of 0.6 and a standard deviation of 0.97 in the

solo-taught class. The *t* statistic for this area was -3.20. The results indicated that co-teaching had a positive impact on student instruction and support from the general education teacher in the co-taught classroom versus the solo-taught classroom.

Co-teachers' perceptions. Both co-teachers perceived that the general education teachers did the most in the classroom even though both teachers felt responsible for instruction (Austin, 2001; Baker, 1995). With management of classroom behaviors, the general education teachers thought that they did 90% of the work, and the special education teachers thought that they did 93% (Hang & Rabren, 2009; Trent et al., 2003). It was perceived that the special education teacher taught more classes and increased their own content knowledge through co-teaching (Austin, 2001). The co-teachers thought there were more behavior management problems in the co-taught classroom (Daane et al., 2000; Welch 2000).

Co-teachers' relationships. Establishing a positive relationship and having compatibility with their partner were significant components for both co-teachers. In addition, co-teachers thought that they became better teachers by their participation in co-teaching (Austin, 2001; Daane et al., 2000; Magiera et al., 2006; Mastropieri et al., 2005; Trent et al., 2003). Teachers were accepting of the models of co-teaching used in the studies. The models consisted of one teach – one drift or observe, station teaching, alternative teaching, parallel teaching, and team teaching (Magiera et al., 2006). Teachers disagreed with the administrator and each other regarding flexibility and consistency with discipline policies for the students with disabilities, as well as whether students with disabilities exhibited increased academic success in the co-taught classroom (Daane et al., 2000; Welch 2000).

What it takes to have a successful co-teaching program. Mastropieri et al. (2005) viewed content knowledge, relationship development, academic content, co-teacher

compatibility, flexibility, collaboration, appreciation, nature of the relationship, and administrative decisions about high stakes testing and planning time as components for success. Phillips and Sapona (1995) stated that co-teachers needed to have shared beliefs about learners and be able to recognize mutual strengths for a successful program. Daane et al. (2000) and Salend et al. (1997) considered confronting differences, administrative support, shared responsibility and decision making, communication, role swapping, and changing the language of the classroom from 'I' to 'we' as important components for success. Areas in need of attention were perceived as common weekly and comprehensive planning times (Austin, 2001; Magiera et al., 2006; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Phillips & Sapona, 1995; Pickard, 2009; Trent et al., 2003; Walther-Thomas, 1997; Welch, 2000), ongoing staff development (Baker, 1995; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Walther-Thomas, 1997), accommodating student needs (Baker, 1995), addressing administrative issues (Gerber & Popp, 2000; Walther-Thomas, 1997), exploring options for delivering services to students with disabilities, communication, supporting new personnel, parent training, and role of the university regarding staff development and pre-service training (Gerber & Popp, 2000), lack of a specific model to implement (Phillips & Sapona, 1995), instructional materials (Pickard, 2009), and student scheduling and large caseloads (Walther-Thomas, 1997).

Benefits of participation in co-teaching. Benefits of participation in the co-teaching model were prevalent with both teachers and students. The teachers believed they experienced professional growth, were satisfied with their roles and tasks, were able to experiment with new methodologies and instructional strategies, increased their understanding of how children learn, expanded their knowledge of instruction, gained confidence, and felt positive about their progress (Phillips & Sapona, 1995; Pickard, 2009; Pugach & Wesson, 1995; Salend et al., 1997;

Walther-Thomas, 1997). These co-teachers modeled cooperation, collaboration, academic skills, metacognitive strategies, and created a sense of community in the classroom (Pugach & Wesson, 1995; Trent et al., 2003). The co-teachers exchanged roles and grew into a single unit and were able to demonstrate an appropriate social climate for the co-taught classroom, creating a positive experience for both teachers and students (Pugach & Wesson, 1995; Welch, 2000).

Students with disabilities and students without disabilities benefited from participation in the co-teaching model. The students with disabilities used modalities and were academically and socially successful, even though they were clustered into general education classes, as the program enhanced their performance (Baker, 1995; Pickard, 2009; Trent et al., 2003; Walther-Thomas, 1997). Students without disabilities enjoyed a lower student-to-teacher ratio and developed deeper empathy for students with disabilities (Pickard, 2009; Trent et al., 2003). These two subsets were able to work together, which resulted in improved classroom communities (Walther-Thomas, 1997). It was important to address the results variable because categories emerged and patterns became evident across the studies.

Co-planning. It was determined that common co-planning time was valued by co-teachers, as inclusion takes more time to orchestrate (Magiera et al., 2006). Preimplementation co-planning and comprehensive co-planning prior to the start of the school year or prior to co-teaching, allowed time for the teams to set long-range goals and objectives, to make decisions about which models would be best to begin with, and to set times for future co-planning (Baker, 1995; Pugach & Wesson, 1995; Welch, 2000). Co-planning provided time for the participants to work at becoming a team or single unit (Phillips & Sapona, 1995; Trent et al., 2003). In addition, co-planning created time for evaluation of student learning and adjustment of

instruction to meet individual student needs, thereby increasing student achievement (Hang & Rabren, 2009; Nevin et al., 2008).

Co-planning options. Co-planning options included weekly formal sessions, two or three sessions per week, daily sessions, sessions on an ongoing basis, informal adjustments, monthly focus groups, and no planning (Baker, 1995; Daane et al., 2000; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Nevin et al., 2008; Phillips & Sapona, 1995; Pickard, 2009; Pugach & Wesson, 1995; Salend et al., 1997; Trent et al., 2003; Walther-Thomas, 1997; Welch, 2000; Zigmond, 1995). The majority of studies agreed that the most effective planning takes place during the school day rather than before or after school or at lunchtime (Magiera et al., 2006; Mastropieri et al., 2005). Austin (2001) and Welch (2000) were the only studies that did not consider mutual planning as being effective. It was determined by one study that a lack of co-planning caused the co-teaching partnerships to be uncomfortable when in the process of co-teaching (Daane et al., 2000).

***Co-planning materials*.** One study listed materials specifically developed for the co-teachers. A linear plan sheet documented responsibilities and provided a sequence of the lessons (Trent et al., 2003). Studies determined sufficient co-planning time, sessions for team building, problem-solving, long-range goal planning, and administrative support were necessary for co-teaching (Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Gerber & Popp, 2000).

Benefits for teachers. A major benefit for co-teachers involved in co-planning, was that the co-teachers reported that they gained confidence in their abilities (Magiera et al., 2006). Co-teachers also had opportunities to reflect on student progress and vary instructional methods to increase student achievement (*ibid*). It was important to address the co-planning variable

because this variable illustrated what was occurring and acknowledged any changes needed for improvement.

Co-implementation. Studies documented that large groups, small groups, and cooperative learning groups were being used for instruction (Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Hang & Rabren, 2009; Mastropieri et al., 2005; Nevin et al., 2008; Pugach & Wesson, 1995; Welch, 2000; Zigmond, 1995). The types of instruction included leader and assistant or one teach – one assist, which was the most prevalent model among the studies (Hang & Rabren, 2009; Magiera et al., 2006; Mastropieri et al., 2005; Salend et al., 1997; Welch, 2000; Zigmond, 1995), simultaneous or parallel teaching (Hang & Rabren, 2009; Magiera et al., 2006; Zigmond, 1995), alternating teaching (Hang & Rabren, 2009; Magiera et al., 2006), station teaching (Magiera et al., 2006), team teaching (Magiera et al., 2006; Pickard, 2009; Trent et al., 2003), direct instruction (Nevin et al., 2008), random assistance (Pugach & Wesson, 1995), peer tutoring and differentiated instruction (Cramer & Nevin, 2006), and student dyads (Welch, 2000). Three studies provided co-implementation times which included 35 minutes daily, 30 minutes four times per week, and 90 minutes daily (Baker, 1995; Welch, 2000; Zigmond, 1995).

Components for success. Teachers considered components for co-teaching success (Gerber & Popp, 2000). Co-teachers agreed that the process needed to be voluntary, with teachers matched with regard to compatibility, philosophy, and teaching style (*ibid*). Partners in the co-teaching relationship agreed on the need for equal membership by working together to monitor student progress, chunk the curriculum into smaller pieces, use curriculum mapping, make adaptations, and manage the classroom (Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Nevin et al., 2008; Phillips & Sapona, 1995; Trent et al., 2003). The co-teachers' major concern was the limited time the special educator had available to be in the classroom co-teaching (Daane et al., 2000).

Adaptations and learning strategies. In some studies, the students in the co-taught classroom had adaptations made to their learning including hands-on, activity-based lessons (Baker, 1995; Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Mastropieri et al., 2005). Oftentimes, the focus was on learning strategies that assisted all students as they became independent learners in the classroom (*ibid*).

Lack of procedures. A few studies did not specify co-implementation procedures or time allotments (Austin, 2001; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Walther-Thomas, 1997). Some of the general education teachers stated that they did not share classroom management or instructional duties with the special educators (Austin, 2001). One even stated that their co-implementation was "on the fly" (Magiera & Zigmond, 2005). This did not follow the concept of true co-teaching. It was important to address the co-implementation variable because it illustrated what was occurring in the schools and the co-taught classrooms.

Evidence of needs. The need for a successful co-teaching program emerged in six studies (Austin, 2001; Daane et al., 2000; Gerber & Popp, 2000; Magiera et al., 2006; Walther-Thomas, 1997; Zigmond, 1995). It was shared by the co-teachers that there needed to be a co-teaching model in lieu of a pull-out model in order to provide services to students with disabilities (Gerber & Popp, 2000). The co-teachers agreed that communication, flexibility, respect, and organization assisted with relationship and program building (Magiera et al., 2006). Each co-teacher expressed the need for time to co-plan, time to give students additional assistance, ongoing professional development, support from the administration and other colleagues, clarification among staff about expectations for students with disabilities, focus on many aspects of co-teaching and not just one (e.g., accommodations), and time to address caseload concerns and student scheduling when clustering students with disabilities in

classrooms (Austin, 2001; Daane et al., 2000; Gerber & Popp, 2000; Magiera et al., 2006; Walther-Thomas, 1997; Zigmond, 1995).

Additional concerns. Gerber and Popp (2000) suggested one criteria for inclusion of students with disabilities in the co-taught classroom as the need to be academically able for co-teaching to be successful (i.e., able to meet with academic success in the general education environment with the use of accommodations and modifications). This was not introduced in any of the other studies. In another study, there were two concerns from the participants. First, teachers thought the pace of instruction being similar in co-taught and solo-taught classrooms was challenging. Second, use of high stakes testing for all students with and without disabilities provided more of a challenge with ensuring classroom success (Cramer & Nevin, 2006). These were not introduced in the other studies.

Summary and Limitations of Literature on Co-teaching

Summary

Co-teaching environments and services which were perceived as successful involved the general education teacher and the special education teacher working together as a team to provide services. In other words, they did the *dance* (Adams & Cessna, 1993). Adams and Cessna (1993) shared that the *dance* that the co-teachers produced included each one being equally responsible for what transpired in the classroom. In addition, the general education and special education co-teachers united to make important decisions regarding their roles and responsibilities based on each individual's training and skills, release of control in the classroom to the other co-teacher on the team, and determination to create a dynamic collaborative relationship consisting of equal partners.

Co-teachers, students with disabilities, and students without disabilities benefited from co-teaching models. The co-teachers were no longer required to work in isolation, grew professionally, increased professional satisfaction and personal support, developed a deeper understanding of how children learn, and gained confidence (Phillips & Sapona, 1995; Salend et al., 1997; Walther-Thomas, 1997). Co-teachers became better teachers, experimented with new methodologies and differentiated instruction, which was acknowledged by their peers (Nevin et al., 2008; Salend et al., 1997; Trent et al., 2003). The experiences of co-teachers were positive, and the teachers were enthusiastic about co-teaching and the positive impact it had on students (Austin, 2001; Cramer & Nevin, 2006).

The students with disabilities benefited through improved services and inclusion in the general education environment and also made adequate yearly progress (Baker, 1995; Nevin et al., 2008). The students without disabilities benefited through increased attention from adults, made adequate yearly progress, and developed a better understanding of students with disabilities (Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Nevin et al., 2008).

Through a review of co-planning and co-implementation practices that were used for providing instruction for students with high incidence disabilities at the elementary level in co-taught classrooms, the present author was able to add to the body of research on inclusion and co-teaching. Results indicated that co-teaching had been adopted as a method for delivery of services for students with varying disabilities in general education environments. Co-teaching proved to be a viable method that had produced positive outcomes for both teachers and students with and without disabilities. Discussion of the findings was organized by categories of co-planning and co-implementation.

Co-planning.

Effective practices. Teachers reported a number of co-planning practices that were effective. These practices consisted of allotting time for the co-teachers to co-plan the lessons, determining materials needed, establishing modifications and accommodations for all students, but particularly those students with disabilities, and granting opportunities for assessment in an attempt to restructure the traditional teaching styles and culture of the school and classroom (Fennick, 2001; Huber, 2005). The practices of long-term and short-term goal setting prior to implementation were perceived to be effective by the co-teachers and administrators. The most effective co-planning practices in theory were co-planning daily and on an ongoing basis during the school day (Austin, 2001; Hang & Rabren, 2009; Magiera et al., 2006; Pugach & Wesson, 1995; Trent et al., 2003). Co-teachers that used these methods of co-planning met at least once daily, during school hours, to co-plan lessons or make changes that would impact current instruction. In these cases, teachers did not meet to co-plan before school, after school, by phone, or on the weekends, as these meeting times would be outside of the school day. Teachers reported that co-planning time allowed for team building, problem-solving, and time to reflect on student progress. Co-planning time also provided the ability to use knowledge gained to vary instruction, thus creating universally designed and differentiated lessons in an attempt to increase student achievement (Gerber & Popp, 2000; Hang & Rabren, 2009; Magiera et al., 2006; Murawski, 2012).

Some teams scheduled multiple or single weekly co-planning sessions during the day, but not on a daily basis. Other teams scheduled co-planning sessions before school, after school, or at lunch. Co-planning sessions, occurring at different times during the day, were perceived by the teachers as effective (Baker, 1995; Magiera et al., 2006; Mastropieri et al., 2005; Nevin et al.,

2008; Welch, 2000; Zigmond, 1995). Co-teachers donated their time, either during or outside of the school day, to create successful co-teaching programs and perceived that a common weekly co-planning period and comprehensive co-planning period were necessary for building successful programs for all students as demonstrated in the *Teacher's Perspective Survey* by Hang and Rabren (2009) with a mean of 3.70 out of a possible 4.0.

Not effective practices. Teachers reported a number of co-planning practices that were not effective. Lack of unified co-planning sessions was a practice in some studies that was not perceived to be effective for co-teaching and resulted in co-teachers being uncomfortable with the co-teaching process (Austin, 2001; Daane et al., 2000; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005). The major reason this practice occurred was that there were no planning times during the school day and/or administrative support to provide time to co-plan. Due to the absence of time to co-plan, the co-teachers were not given an opportunity to develop an understanding about how to work as a single unit, which often resulted in two single teachers in a classroom who were not functioning as a team. Thus, no value was added by the second professional educator (i.e., special education teacher) on the team (Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Mastropieri et al, 2005; Zigmond, 2006; Zigmond & Matta, 2004). This lack of unified co-planning often resulted in the use of a one teach – one assist paradigm where the special educator took the role of support for the classroom (Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Murawski, 2010; Weiss & Lloyd, 2003).

Co-implementation.

Effective practices. Teachers reported a number of co-implementation practices that were effective. In co-implementation, co-teachers equally shared classroom management and instructional duties. In addition, co-teachers equally maintained areas of responsibility that were perceived by the teachers and administrators as practices that created successful co-teaching

teams, resulting in positive outcomes for teachers and students (Mastropieri et al., 2005; Nevin et al., 2008; Trent et al., 2003). Other practices that were perceived as effective involved teachers' voluntary participation to be co-teachers in inclusive settings (i.e., as opposed to being selected by the administration), and matched compatibility of co-teachers based on teaching philosophy, teaching style, and use of a hands-on, activity-based approach to teaching (Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Gerber & Popp, 2000; Mastropieri et al., 2005).

Some practices involved the hierarchy of co-teaching models as previously described by Morocco and Aquilar (2002) (i.e., alternate leading and supporting, station teaching, parallel teaching, flexible grouping, alternate teaching, and team teaching). Representation of these different models of co-teaching were included in nine of the studies (Hang & Rabren, 2009; Magiera et al., 2006; Mastropieri et al., 2005; Phillips & Sapona, 1995; Pickard, 2009; Salend et al., 1997; Trent et al., 2003; Welch, 2000; Zigmond, 1995). Team teaching demonstrated the highest level of co-implementation with co-teachers considered equally in the process. The most prevalent method for co-teaching was the one teach – one assist method whereby the special education teacher was used in the capacity of support for the classroom and the roles and responsibilities between the co-teachers were not equal (Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Murawski, 2010; Weiss & Lloyd, 2003).

Not effective practices. Teachers reported a number of co-implementation practices that were not effective. Lack of sufficient time for the special education teacher to be co-teaching in the general education classroom was a practice that was perceived as not effective by the co-teachers. Three studies described the time spent co-teaching as 90 minutes or less per session (Baker, 1995; Welch, 2000; Zigmond, 1995). Unequal division of labor inclusive of classroom management, instructional duties, and maintenance of specific areas of responsibility, was a

practice that resulted in one teacher alone performing the duties that were intended to be equally distributed (Austin, 2001; Daane et al., 2000). This type of arrangement created a hierarchy in which co-teachers were unlikely to create a positive co-teaching relationship and growth for either teachers or students.

Implications for Practice. Practices perceived as effective, practices confirmed as effective through statistical analysis, and practices that were not effective were presented above in the co-planning and co-implementation sections. A compilation of these practices are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Effective and Not Effective Practices for Co-planning and Co-implementation

Effective Practices	Not Effective Practices
Co-planning	
Allot time to co-plan, determine materials needed, establish modifications and accommodations, assess and restructure teaching styles. Make long-term and short-term goals. Meet daily and during the school day. Use differentiated instruction and universal design for learning. Multiple or single weekly co-planning sessions during the day. Co-planning sessions before school, after school, or at breaks.	Provide lack of unified co-planning sessions.
Co-implementation	
Equally share classroom management and instructional duties. Each teacher maintains areas of responsibility. Use Volunteers for participation. Match co-teachers for compatibility on teaching philosophy, teaching style, and use of a hands-on activity based approach. Use co-teaching models: alternate leading and supporting, station teaching, parallel teaching, flexible grouping, alternate teaching, and team teaching.	Provide lack of sufficient time for inclusion of special education teacher in the general education classroom. Provide unequal division of labor between co-teachers.

These practices could possibly be generalized to different populations. The co-teaching model demonstrated the complexity of collaboration in special education. However, few studies demonstrated the impact of co-teaching on student achievement and additional outcomes (Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain, & Shamberger, 2010). An effective co-teaching program could only occur if the educators and administrators created a school culture that was accepting of the model. Effective relationships between co-teachers with respect to communication, flexibility,

respect, and organization are required for successful implementation (Magiera et al., 2006). Administrative support and professional development need to be available to teachers so that the co-teachers can co-plan, co-implement, and co-evaluate the instruction appropriately (Daane et al., 2000; Gerber & Popp, 2000).

The literature described the need for support from the district, school, and classroom levels in order to create successful co-teaching environments (Walsh, 2012). It appeared that an extension of support for co-teaching to the state level through policy changes and support for funding showed promise (Muller, Friend, & Hurley-Chamberlain, 2009). Some state-level agencies had established limited support for co-teaching initiatives through policy and practice (*ibid*). Muller, Friend, and Hurley-Chamberlain (2009) recommended statewide promotions of co-teaching practices and suggested a need to establish collaboration with higher education for both training and support. This initiative would require inclusion in each individual state's initiatives, as well as promotion at the national level through a change in policy. Through policy changes and funding support at the state and national levels, co-teaching environments could become a viable option for students with disabilities in all states (Muller, Friend, & Hurley-Chamberlain, 2009).

Limitations

This literature review explored practices that co-teachers used in co-planning and co-implementation of instruction. Most of the studies on co-teaching examined the perceptions, attitudes, roles, and relationships of the co-teachers and administrators. Some also examined the logistics of the different programs (Austin, 2001; Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Daane et al., 2000; Hang & Rabren, 2009; Magiera et al., 2006; Nevin et al., 2008; Phillips & Sapona, 1995; Pickard, 2009; Pugach & Wesson, 1995; Salend et al., 1997; Zigmond, 1995). These studies

were often subjective and, as such, were subject to bias. One was limited in determining the effectiveness of the practices. The co-teachers thought they were effective, but it was not possible to state emphatically that these practices were effective based upon data.

Because of the constructivist lens and conceptual framework used by the present author to examine the model, not effective practices were identified, which impacted the success of the model. One would agree that co-teaching was being implemented with emphasis of NCLB (P.L. 107-110) and IDEA 2004 (P.L. 108-446) whereby students with disabilities had access to the general education curriculum and inclusion in the general education classroom. Administrators and co-teachers, however, may have had different views on its effectiveness (Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Daane et al., 2000; Friend et al., 2010; Walther-Thomas, 1997). One could conclude from this that co-teaching was not effective or at the most moderately effective (i.e., effect size of 0.40) as reported in Murawski and Swanson (2001). However, there were others who had shown positive benefits for co-teaching versus teaching in isolation (Hang & Rabren, 2009).

Additional limitations included the small number of quantitative studies (i.e., two studies) and mixed methods studies (i.e., four studies) which addressed this topic (Austin, 2001; Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Daane et al., 2000; Hang & Rabren, 2009; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Welch, 2000). There were also a small number of studies (i.e., four studies) which sought to evaluate a practice with regard to student outcomes (Baker, 1995; Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Hang & Rabren, 2009; Trent et al., 2003). These small numbers may have influenced the results of the literature review. Therefore, an inability to establish statistical evidence, that could have determined effects and allowed comparison of results across multiple studies, comprised a trend in this area, and proved to be helpful to the field, did exist.

Summary

After investigation, it became apparent that there was a lack of knowledge of the elements needed regarding the culture of schools and classrooms for the creation of successful co-teaching programs. Some of these elements include the norms, values, and routines of the schools and classrooms which are influenced by the staff of resisters (i.e., those staff members that did not like change) and risk takers (i.e., change agents) and are led by the leadership team. It is the members of the leadership team who either lead the resistance or opt for change (Friend & Cook, 1992, p. 139; Young, 2008; Zeichner & Gore, 1990).

An investigation of the practices for inclusion through the use of co-teaching (i.e., co-planning, and co-implementation) in the different schools appears to be lacking. How these practices are influenced by the norms, values, and routines of those individual cultures in the schools and classrooms warrant further investigation. The variables would be cultures and inclusion practices. Participants in this investigation should come from schools and classrooms equitably across the district. This investigation will allow for determination of what is expected at the district, school, and classroom levels and then what is actually occurring for co-teaching. It will also address the impact of culture on the inclusion model. A qualitative study would be advantageous, as it provides an opportunity to collect data while gaining insights from key stakeholders. This data could then be used to compare similar characteristics and identify trends of the culture of schools and classrooms to see how they affect collaborative practices in co-planning and co-implementation of instruction.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Extensive research has been completed on the construct of school culture and school culture in relation to certain variables. Little research has been published, however, that addresses the academic culture of classrooms, school culture, and/or overarching mission and vision from the school district level regarding inclusion of students with disabilities. This research may have had an impact on the development of today's school and classroom cultures. It was the aim of this investigation to explore the knowledge of the elements of the current school culture at the elementary level and how these elements influenced inclusion of students with high incidence disabilities in general education classrooms through use of models such as co-teaching. An in-depth description and understanding of the research design was proposed to address the following questions:

1. How does the staff at the elementary school level perceive the school's culture and the culture's impact on practices of inclusion for students with disabilities?
2. How does the staff at the elementary school level perceive the impact that the school's culture has on the co-planning part of co-teaching?

   2a. Why are some practices used by general education and special education teachers in co-planning perceived as effective or not effective?

3. How does the staff at the elementary school level perceive the impact that the school's culture has on the co-implementation part of co-teaching?

   3a. Why are some practices used by general education and special education teachers in co-implementation perceived as effective or not effective?

Type of Study

This study was a qualitative multicase study with the purpose of doing comparative case studies (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Qualitative research is described as a system of inquiry which seeks to build a holistic, largely narrative, description to inform the researcher's understanding of a social or cultural phenomenon (*ibid*). The case study was an empirical inquiry that was used to investigate a phenomenon within its natural context. This methodology was especially useful when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context were not clear and in which multiple sources of evidence were included (Yin, 2009).

Procedures

Study Participants. A single school district in central Virginia was solicited to participate in the study. To promote interest in the study, an information sheet about the study was distributed to the central office staff and principals and co-teachers in grades three, four, and five in each elementary school prior to selection of the participants. This information sheet can be found in *Appendix A.* The population for this school district was embedded in five "magisterial districts" which were very diverse in race/ethnicity and economic status. In order to obtain a global perspective from this population, a single elementary school was chosen from each of the five magisterial districts. Random purposeful sampling was used to gain access to a single elementary school in each magisterial district that was practicing inclusion for students with disabilities through the service delivery option of co-teaching. This type of sampling added

credibility to the sample when the potential purposeful sample was larger than one could handle and reduced judgment within a purposeful category (Patton, 1990).

The study participants from each elementary school consisted of one school administrator and one general education teacher and one special education teacher that were co-teaching in a general education classroom. All participants were required to have a minimum of one year of experience working in their current roles. In order to participate in the research study, teachers also needed to be working with grades three, four, or five and have students with high incidence disabilities in their co-taught classrooms. Participants needed to agree to participate in all aspects of the study and were required to sign a consent form. The consent forms can be found in *Appendix B* and *Appendix C.*

Instrumentation. The human observer was the main instrument of choice during observations and interviews of teachers and administrators in their natural settings. For classroom observations, a co-teaching checklist worksheet was used as a guide and can be found in *Appendix D.* An additional instrument was used to guide the interviews and consisted of a semi-structured interview questionnaire. This interview format consisted of broad questions with supplemental probes, which was a sufficient instrument to focus discussion on the research questions of the study during the individual interview sessions. Use of an interview in a case study was appropriate, as it included engaging, positive, open-ended questions which were designed to collect useful data that uncovered identifiable elements of the school's culture and the culture's impact on practices of inclusion for students with disabilities (Merriam & Associates, 2002). In addition, the interview had the potential to reveal the human meaning-making forces that could help the participants to understand the culture of the school community and how it impacted the acceptance or rejection for inclusion of students with disabilities

(Lincoln, 2005, in Paul, pp. 60-64). Care was taken in designing the questions to be consistent with the goals and designs of this study (Yin, 2009). The semi-structured interview questionnaire can be found in *Appendix E*.

Pilot Tests. Because the observation checklist was newly developed by adapting and merging a co-teaching observation checklist and observation charts from two sources and the researcher wished to ensure the data provided answers to the research questions from the study, pilot test one was conducted. The initial observation form was tested in four elementary co-taught classrooms in grades K, 3, and 5 by the researcher within a two-day period. The pilot test for this form was used under operating conditions and in the environment for which the form was designed. Observations lasted from 30 to 60 minutes depending on the grade level's amount of content area schedule.

After observations for pilot test one were completed, changes were made to the form to improve the accuracy of the data collection process. For example, elementary and co-planning were added to the name of the document in order to focus on specifics at this level and to be able to acknowledge activities planned and carried into the co-implementation phase. A column was added to document when this occurred. Evidence was qualified as observed once during the session. Not applicable (NA) was removed from the rating scale, as all statements within the subsections were best determined as either evident or not evident. One question was removed from the first subsection of the form, as it appeared to be subjective. An additional question regarding the use of inclusive language (i.e., we, us) was removed from the second section of the form. These inclusive terms were not observed in any of the four observations, but the classrooms included a feeling of belonging for both co-teachers, as noted by the researcher. The statement about the description of the grouping patterns was narrowed to three, which included

pairs, small groups, and whole class, and provided a more concise description of groupings used at the elementary level. Four grouping descriptors were removed, which included hetero/homogeneous, learning styles, multi-levels, and independent learning. The co-teaching models were aligned with the literature, and asterisks were added under the models to relate them to the correct reference. Changes were made in the bottom three observation charts of the form. The ratings of extensive, moderate, and slight were removed from the first two charts and replaced with a check mark option, which was easier to use during observations. One entry in the first chart was removed, as it was redundant when compared to the top portion of the observation form. In the third chart, the term lab equipment was removed because it was not pertinent to the elementary level. The terms Promethean Whiteboard and CD Player were added because they were present in the elementary classrooms and were used during the observations.

A second pilot test was conducted on the remaining forms to ensure the data collected provided answers to the research questions from the study. Four forms were constructed by the researcher and consisted of a semi-structured interview, administrator descriptive/reflective protocol, co-planning descriptive/reflective protocol, and co-implementation descriptive/reflective protocol. These forms were tested within a two week period in one elementary school with the administrator and co-teachers in grade four. This pilot test was used under operating conditions and in the environment for which the forms were designed. Time amounts varied for the interviews, administrative, co-planning, and co-implementation observations. Each form was suited to obtain the data needed and did not require any further adjustments. Evidence from these two pilot tests were consistent with the results of the research.

Data Collection. The investigator individually collected all data pertaining to this research study. It was the responsibility of the researcher to collect these data over a three-

month period. Data were collected from five administrators, five general education co-teachers, and five special education co-teachers. Initially, data were gathered from direct observations of the principals and the co-teachers. Observations were conducted by shadowing each principal for two hours and documenting events and reactions of all staff through use of an administrator descriptive and reflective protocol. This protocol can be found in *Appendix F*. Co-teachers were observed in their processes of co-planning for instruction and co-implementation of instruction for a minimum of one lesson. The co-planning observation was conducted by the researcher with particular emphasis on interactions and roles as demonstrated by the co-teachers and recorded using a co-planning descriptive and reflective protocol. This protocol can be found in *Appendix G.* Co-implementation of the lesson was recorded with use of a checklist which identifies lesson presentation, materials, co-teaching models, classroom structure, instructional delivery method, instructional strategies, and technology (see *Appendix D*). This information was used to complete a co-implementation descriptive and reflective protocol and can be found in *Appendix H.* Next, individual person-to-person interviews were conducted, recorded, and transcribed. By starting with the observations, the researcher was able to gain data and insights which could then be clarified and probed during the interview process. This gave the researcher an opportunity to gather additional information and insights about the meaning that participants made of their daily routines and school culture.

The descriptive and reflective fieldnotes, documented by the researcher during and following each observation, provided further data that assisted in identification of school and classroom cultures. Journaling by the researcher, inclusive of feelings and thoughts about the experience, followed each interaction. The role of this researcher was one of observer participant and, as such, allowed for establishment of rapport and relationship with the

participants but did not allow for becoming a member of the group throughout the data collection process (McMillan, 2012). This stance helped establish trust with the participants. A compilation of the research questions, participants, and data collection instruments which were used can be found in Table 9.

Table 9

Research Questions/Participants/Data Collection Instruments

Research Questions	Participants	Data Collection
How does the staff at the elementary school level perceive the school's culture and the culture's impact on practices of inclusion for students with disabilities?	Administrators General education co-teachers Special education co-teachers	Semi-structured Interview Questionnaire Observations – shadowing administrators – events, reactions of staff co-planning with co-teachers – interactions, roles co-implementation with co-teachers presentation, model, structure, strategies, technology Fieldnotes Descriptive Reflective
How does the staff at the elementary school level perceive the impact that the school's culture has on the co-planning part of co-teaching? Why are some practices used by general education and special education teachers in co-planning perceived as effective or not effective?	Administrators General education co-teachers Special education co-teachers	Semi-structured Interview Questionnaire Observations – co-planning with co-teachers – interactions, roles co-implementation with co-teachers presentation, model, structure, strategies, technology Fieldnotes Descriptive Reflective
How does the staff at the elementary school level perceive the impact that the school's culture has on the co-implementation part of co-teaching? Why are some practices used by general education and special education teachers in co-implementation perceived as effective or not effective?	Administrators General education co-teachers Special education co-teachers	Semi-structured Interview Questionnaire Observations – co-implementation with co-teachers presentation, model, structure, strategies, technology Fieldnotes Descriptive Reflective

Data Analysis. Data were analyzed through use of interpretational analysis. With use of interpretational analysis in this case study, the researcher was looking for patterns and themes

within the data to explain the phenomenon (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Using the research questions and conceptual framework as guides, the researcher was able to examine the data to find common patterns and themes regarding norms, values, and routines. Identification of themes in qualitative research provided a step in analyzing culture (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Figure 3 provided a graphic representation of the research approach to the study.

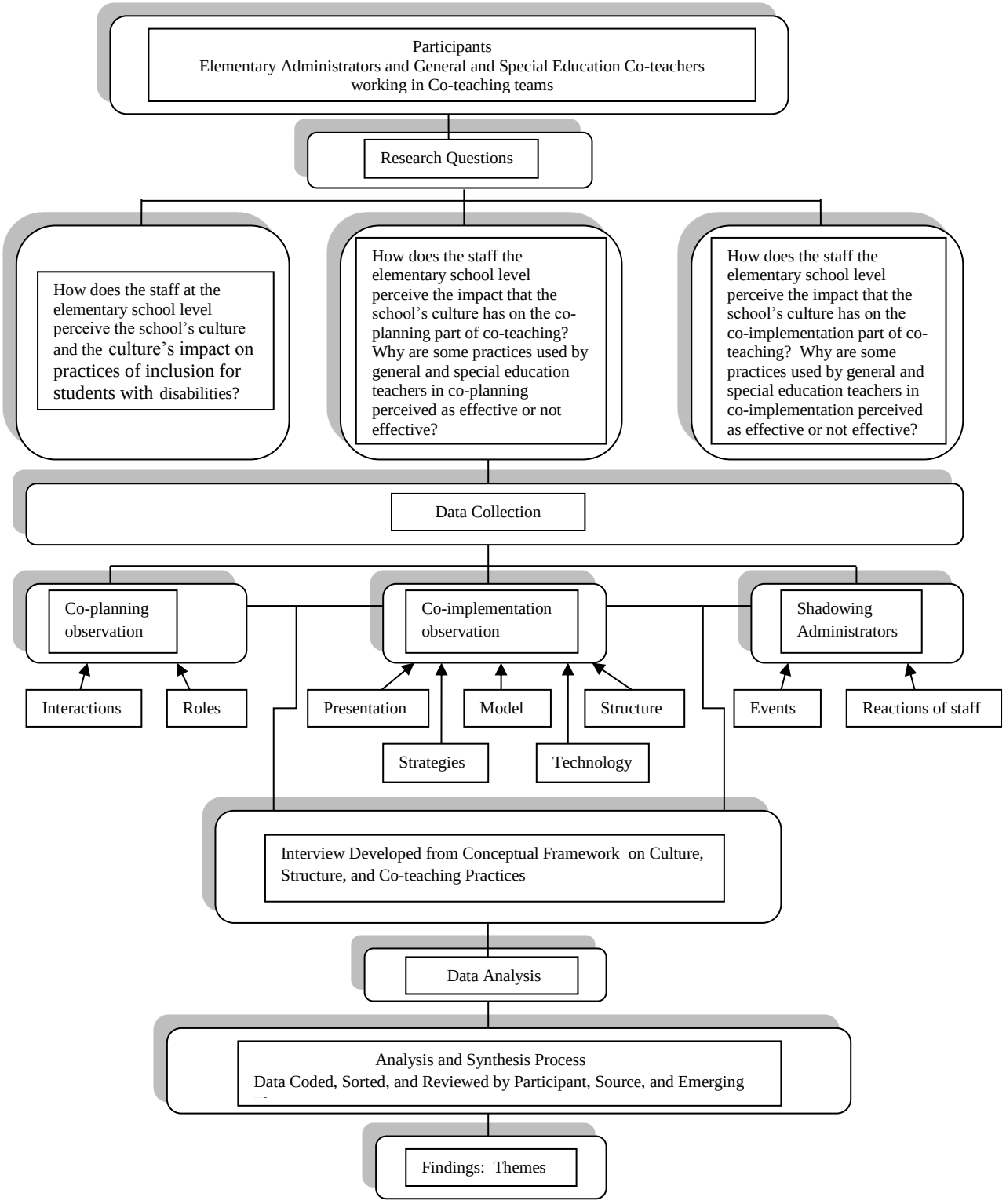

Figure 3. *Study Approach*

Research Quality

The processes that were used to collect data were those of a social constructivist to include trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Patton, 2002; Rudestam & Newton, 2007). Assurance of ethical conduct in this research was also addressed.

Keeping a field journal throughout the study to describe feelings and thoughts helped ensure the trustworthiness of the study, since research qualities of trustworthiness include multiple perspectives, interests, and realities (Patton, 2002). By remaining neutral and using rigorous data collection methods, different data collection techniques, and the implementation of a member checking strategy, credibility was enhanced (Patton, 2002). The member checking process occurred via email two weeks after data were collected and transcribed for each participant, with an expectation of a return response from the participant within two weeks. By collecting thick, rich descriptions to describe the phenomenon, transferability of the findings in this study should be apparent to the reader with the decision being left up to the reader as to whether the results meet his/her needs (Lincoln & Guba, 1991). Utilization of an audit trail, inclusive of raw data, recorded data, written notes, related materials, and other relevant information, helped to establish confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1991). Finally, an external audit was conducted by a colleague who was trained in qualitative research and provided a more objective review of all aspects of the study and assisted in identifying accuracy and weaknesses of the results (McMillan, 2012).

It was necessary to conduct ethically responsible research. In this case, it was important to ensure the protection of human subjects. Participants received a description of the study and a request to volunteer. Those who agreed to participate received further information about their

rights as a participant, and were required to sign a consent form prior to data collection, in accordance with the guidelines provided by Virginia Commonwealth University's Institutional Review Board (IRB; Nichols-Casebolt, 2012). The IRB application for Virginia Commonwealth University and IRB application for the school district were approved before data collection commenced. Pseudonyms were used throughout the data analysis and reporting process in order to comply with the requirement of confidentiality and to protect the identification of the individual participants, schools, and the district,

VCU IRB

An Institutional Review Board (IRB) completed application was presented to the Office of Research at Virginia Commonwealth University. This procedure was the first step in the process of conducting research of this magnitude.

School District IRB

An Institutional Review Board (IRB) completed application was presented to the Office of Research and Planning at the school district. This procedure was the second step in the process of conducting research of this magnitude.

Delimitations

The researcher's intent was to provide a research analysis about how school and classroom cultures affected practices of inclusion for students with disabilities. In addition, the study attempted to examine the influence of school culture on the inclusionary practice of co-teaching and its use of co-planning and co-implementation for providing appropriate services within the least restrictive environment. This study was delimited to elementary administrators, general education and special education co-teachers working in co-teaching teams in a public school district in the state of Virginia.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

Existing literature examining the academic culture of classrooms, school culture, and mission and vision from the school district level is limited in general. This literature and its influence on inclusion of students with high incidence disabilities, in elementary general education classrooms, through the use of co-teaching are scant. Currently, there exists a need for knowledge of the elements of school culture, inclusive of norms, values, and routines, which influences inclusion of students with disabilities in co-teaching environments.

The purpose of this study was to describe how school and classroom cultures affect practices of inclusion for students with disabilities. In addition, it examined how the use of co-teaching, with processes of co-planning and co-implementation, was influenced by the school culture. Finally, effective and not effective practices for co-planning and co-implementation were addressed with key stakeholders to determine why some practices work and some practices do not work. Data were collected using observations and interviews. Moreover, a field journal and audit trails were kept, as well as member checking and an external audit.

This chapter presents the results of data collected and analyzed during the course of this qualitative multicase study. Results are presented to address the following research questions:

1. How does the staff at the elementary school level perceive the school's culture and the culture's impact on practices of inclusion for students with disabilities?

2. How does the staff at the elementary school level perceive the impact that the school's culture has on the co-planning part of co-teaching?

   2a. Why are some practices used by general education and special education teachers in co-planning perceived as effective or not effective?

3. How does the staff at the elementary school level perceive the impact that the school's culture has on the co-implementation part of co-teaching?

   3a. Why are some practices used by general education and special education teachers in co-implementation perceived as effective or not effective?

Results describe the observations of school administrators in their daily routines, and general education co-teachers and special education co-teachers during the processes of co-planning and co-implementation. The semi-structured interview results of these same individuals describe their perceptions on school culture, impact of the school's culture on the practices of inclusion for students with disabilities, and roles of the key players on the impact of effective and not effective practices for co-planning and co-implementation.

Findings

School District

One elementary school from each of the five magisterial districts in a single school district in central Virginia agreed to participate in the study. Criteria for participation, as well as direction from the district level regarding recent movement of the administrators to different locations and hiring of new personnel, created challenges in obtaining the first school chosen for each magisterial district through use of a random purposeful selection. This suburban district has a very diverse socioeconomic profile and has experienced a reduction in staff at the district, school, and classroom levels over the last five years. The district does, however, have a vision, a

mission, and beliefs that promote guidance to new levels of excellence for all parts of and personnel within the district. Below are included the district's vision, mission, and beliefs:

Vision

This school district will be the PREMIER school district in the United States.

Mission

This school district, an innovative leader in educational excellence, will actively engage our students in diverse educational, social, and civic learning experiences that inspire and empower them to become contributing citizens.

Beliefs

We believe in accountability.

We believe in a school community grounded in respect and integrity.

We believe in continuous improvement to meet and exceed the challenges of a changing environment.

We believe that our students can and will learn.

We believe that excellence with equity requires shared responsibility among all staff, parents, students, and community as stakeholders.

We believe that excellence is attainable by all.

We believe that understanding and respecting diversity enriches the individual and community.

We believe that there is value in learning from each other.

We believe that individuals are most successful in safe, caring, and well-maintained environments.

We believe that providing this county's students a quality education is the best

investment for the future.

We believe in cultivating positive relationships.

We believe in the equity of opportunities for personal growth.

We believe that public education is essential to the survival of a democratic society.

It is the responsibility of the special education school district office staff to offer guidance to the schools and make decisions about implementation in the use of best practices for inclusion of students with disabilities. Within the district level culture, there is an emphasis for full inclusion of students with disabilities. This theme was evidenced in how it was presented to the staff at the school level as documented in this statement by a teacher who participated in the study:

> I think that inclusion comes from the top down. I think that our administration and I think the administration above that want everyone to be included in a regular setting if they can, least restrictive environment, to have them in the regular classroom. It's presented to us from there and it trickles down to the next level and to the next level.

Another school level staff member spoke to the county level idea of full inclusion when she stated,

> We seem to have an "all or nothing" kind of idea that's going on within the county. We are fortunate at this school that I am able to have some small groups that are complete pull-out groups. But once we do that, the county is pushing towards all of this being gone and it's all 100% co-teaching.

Therefore, it was apparent that an expectation for full inclusion would become the norm, as it was valued within this district, and all school and classroom levels were expected to comply. Subsequently, processes for implementation, such as co-teaching, have become routines that were followed to support the district culture of inclusion for students with disabilities.

School Demographics

The individual schools from the five magisterial districts were similar in their beliefs about student learning and the need to provide support for all students. However, these five elementary schools were diverse in their socioeconomic status and make-up of their individual communities. Because of the diversity within the communities, each school had a specified area of focus. One example was the multiple nationalities that helped to create the community of a particular school. This school celebrated its diversity by having an international food night where the community was invited to share a potluck supper and bring a food sample to share that was representative of their culture. The uniqueness of each school contributed to the building of that school's culture. Overall, the free and reduced lunch status from all five schools ranged from five percent to 70 percent with a mean of 43.6 percent (e.g., 5%, 25%, 53%, 65%, and 70%). The administrators described their schools differently. Each administrator portrayed his/her school as eclectic and diverse. Some of the administrators mentioned race and nationalities of the students and the high population of English Language Learners (ELL). Two schools were Title One schools indicating they have high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families. The communities where the schools were situated ranged from upper middle class status, with working parents and divorced homes, to low socioeconomic status, with single parents, grandparents, and foster parents, who were living in government subsidized housing complexes. Table 10 describes the demographics of the schools and

experience of the staff involved in this study that provided support for these schools and students.

Table 10

Demographics of Schools and Experience of Staff

Schools	Students in building	SE versus Total Students	SWD in Co-taught Classrooms	SET versus GET K-5	Principal experience in years	GET experience in years	SET experience in years
School 1	540	3/25	OHI 2 SLD 1	4/25	11	25	12
School 2	400	4/22	OHI 3 SLD 1	3.5/20	5	5	6
School 3	540	8/18	OHI 1 OHI/ED 1 SLD/OHI 3 SLD 2 ID 1	3.5/25	2	3	5
School 4	458	4/19	OHI 2 SLD 2	4/22	2	6	12
School 5	509	7/19	OHI 2 SLD 2 ASD 2 ASD/VI 1	3.5/26	2	4	14

Note: SE – Special Education; GE – General Education; SWD – Students with Disabilities; SET – Special Education Teacher; GET – General Education Teacher; OHI – Other Health Impairment; SLD – Specific Learning Disability; ED – Emotional Disability; ID – Intellectual Disability; ASD – Autism Spectrum Disorder; VI – Visual Impairment

Observation Results

Observation Process. All observations (i.e., administrator observations, co-planning observations, and co-implementation observations) were conducted by the researcher within the natural environments of the five schools. Along with the designated descriptive/reflective protocol for use with each type of observation, a field journal was kept that included the investigator's feelings and thoughts about each data collection experience. As an observer

participant, it was possible to have a good rapport and a positive relationship with each participant throughout the data collection process without becoming a member of the individual groups. Immediately following data collection for each observation, the data were coded for norms, values, and routines which provided immediate feedback to the researcher. Themes for each observation within each individual school were derived and then compiled. This process was repeated for each school and allowed for noticeable consistent themes to emerge across the five schools.

Administrators. The administrators of the five schools were observed for two hours each as they carried out their daily routines. Observations focused on the norms, values, and routines of events and the reactions of staff. The events category of the norms focused on a safe physical environment and implementation of processes. The events category for values included risk-taking, high expectations, nature of the relationships, and provision of resources. Reactions of staff from all five schools, included positive attitudes and high morale. These were also considered a part of the events category for values since they supported the nature of relationships category. Finally, the events category for routines focused on visits to all classrooms, effective communication, shared responsibilities, and flexibility.

All administrator observations were coded for norms, values, and routines. An aggregate of these five observations produced events within the norms which included (a) safe physical environment: actively involved with bus duty and following rules, spoke with students about appropriate behaviors in school, implemented single entry point for visitors, and (b) implementation of processes: addressed staff using verbal and nonverbal practices, participated with announcements. Aggregate of the events within the values included (a) risk-taking: sat on floor next to student and encouraged a response, encouraged student involvement in morning

announcements, (b) high expectations: shared with students the expectations for cafeteria and classrooms, promoted ability to make good choices, provided rewards for accomplishments, expected excellence from teachers about different topics, (c) nature of relationships and reactions of staff: conducted effective and comfortable communication between administrator and staff and administrator and students, evidenced high morale by teachers about the administrator, as one teacher said – "I love him!" and (d) provision of resources: provided technology throughout the building, supported after school activities for students and community, purchased books for bookroom, provided red bags in every room with safety supplies. Finally, the aggregate of the events within the routines included (a) visits all classrooms: made one or two visits to classrooms on a daily basis, (b) effective communication: communicated verbally and non-verbally with teachers and students about different topics, (c) shared responsibilities: participated in bus and cafeteria duties, provided discipline support for students, supported staff for multiple reasons, and (d) flexibility: supported teacher with parent contacts and meeting schedules. Figure 4 provides a graphic representation of the aggregate of events representing the norms, values, and routines demonstrated by the administrators throughout the observations.

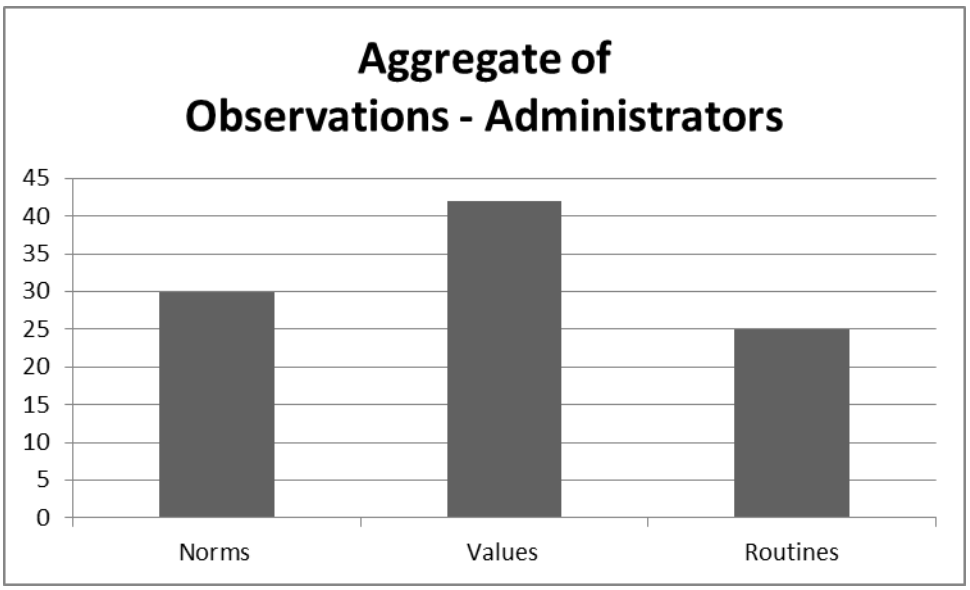

Figure 4: *Aggregate of Norms, Values, and Routines on Administrator Observations*

Based on the observation results documented in the five Administrator Descriptive/Reflective Protocols (*Appendix F),* themes emerged about the administrators which included relationships and communication, implementation of processes, high expectations, shared responsibilities, flexibility, and safe environment. As this result of these five observations, the researcher felt that the administrators in all five schools were knowledgeable about the needs of their school communities. Each one held high expectations, not only for herself/himself, but for staff and students. There was a particular focus on safety for all students, staff, and volunteers involved in school activities as was seen in the use of red safety bags, single point entries, locked classrooms, and use of classroom safety drills. These observations revealed that the administrators within the study were willing to do whatever needed to be done to support the school and provide a safe environment. This was seen with their shared responsibilities of bus duty and lunch duty, and when stepping in to run meetings in the absence of another staff member. The lasting impression, from the researcher after these five observations, was that these five administrators were positive and truly loved their jobs. This was heard in their voices

and was seen during the walk-throughs as they shared their desires to provide the best environment for their individual school communities.

Co-planning. The general education and special education co-teachers of the five schools were observed during their co-planning sessions which lasted from 30 minutes to 65 minutes. Observations were conducted with a focus on the norms, values, and routines of interactions and roles. The interactions category of the norms focused on instructional practices and implementation of processes in the learning environment. The interactions category for values included risk-taking, high expectations, and nature of the relationships. Roles of staff included equal partners and provision of a safe physical environment. Therefore, roles were considered a part of the interactions category under values since they supported the high expectations and nature of relationships categories. Finally, the interactions category for routines focused on effective communication, shared responsibilities, and flexibility.

All co-planning observations were coded for norms, values, and routines. An aggregate of these five observations produced interactions within the norms which included (a) instructional practices: made use of pacing guides, encouraged use of graphic organizers (e.g. venn diagrams, place value charts, and compound flip charts), reviewed, adapted, and modified materials before use, and (b) implementation of processes in the learning environment: worked in pairs to co-plan, encouraged flexible goal setting, addressed roles of each co-teacher, discussed use of whole group teaching and station teaching. Aggregate of the interactions within the values included (a) risk-taking: encouraged reteaching and reevaluating student progress, entertained the question *why* for material choices, (b) high expectations: established goals for teachers and students, set consequences for students' actions, created ideas for challenging materials, and (c) nature of the relationships: evidenced an equal partnership that was agreeable

and structured with use of calm voices, participated in brainstorming ideas for lessons. Finally, the aggregate of the interactions within the routines included (a) effective communication: shared adapted materials before use, made decisions together for all parts of lessons, held open discussion for academics, discipline, and choices for implementation, participated in emailing, texting, and co-planning meetings, (b) shared responsibilities: participated in locating and adapting materials, made decisions about use of discipline procedures, and (c) flexibility: supported each other when faced with a change in schedule. Figure 5 provides a graphic representation of the aggregate of interactions representing the norms, values, and routines demonstrated by the co-teachers throughout the co-planning observations.

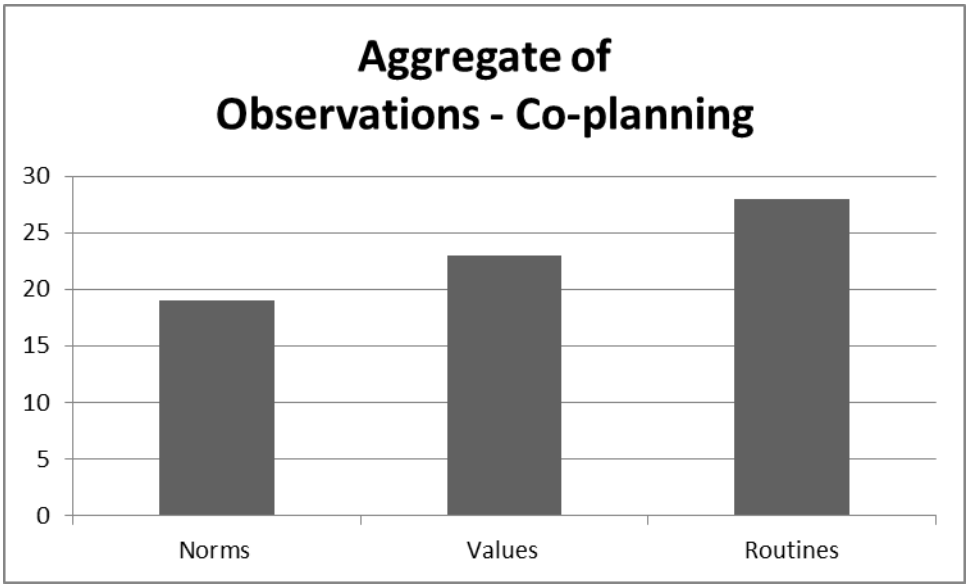

Figure 5: *Aggregate of Norms, Values, and Routines on Co-planning Observations*

Based on the observation results documented in the five Co-planning Descriptive/Reflective Protocols (*Appendix G),* themes emerged about the co-planning sessions which included relationships and communication, implementation of processes and instructional practices, high expectations, shared responsibilities, and flexibility. As this result of these five observations, the researcher felt that the co-planning processes in all five schools had a natural

flow with the two teachers offering suggestions and willing to construct materials. Three of the five co-planning sessions were clearly orchestrated by the general education co-teachers, whereas two out of the five sessions demonstrated equal partners. All the special education co-teachers were willing to make needed modifications for the students with disabilities. The lasting impression, from the researcher after these five observations, was that these five co-planning sessions were conducted by positive co-teachers who wanted all of their students to be successful in the co-taught classroom. This was heard in their voices as they talked about the needs of all their students and developed ideas about how to best meet those needs.

Co-implementation. The general education and special education co-teachers of the five schools were observed throughout co-implementation of the lesson planned during their co-planning sessions. These co-implementation sessions lasted from 60 minutes to 90 minutes. Observations were conducted with a focus on the norms, values, and routines of presentations and use of available technology. The presentations category of the norms focused on instructional strategies and implementation of processes. The presentations category for values included risk-taking, high expectations, and nature of the relationships. Finally, the presentations category for routines focused on effective communication, shared responsibilities, and flexibility. Technology was considered an additional category and documented types of technology and levels of use.

All co-implementation observations were coded for norms, values, and routines. An aggregate of these five observations produced presentations within the norms which included (a) instructional strategies: provided a variety of materials, differentiated instruction in language arts and math, and (b) implementation of processes: co-teaching models inclusive of alternate leading and supporting, station teaching, flexible grouping, team teaching, and one teach – one

assist. Aggregate of the presentations within the values included (a) risk-taking: engaged students in academic activities requiring verbal responses, (b) high expectations: provided differentiated instruction, expected positive student behavior and cooperation, provided explicit instructions with each transition, and (c) nature of the relationships: promoted calmness and equity of voice, actively involved students with verbal and non-verbal expressions and signals. Finally, the aggregate of the presentations within the routines included (a) effective communication: engaged students through use of verbal and non-verbal exchanges, exhibited respect for co-teaching partners and students, (b) shared responsibilities: diffused behaviors, shared instruction with a variety of co-teaching models, supported students' learning independently and in groups, and (c) flexibility: changed co-teaching model multiple times, supported students through use of various groupings.

Technology was used in four of the five schools during the co-implementation process. Types of technology consisted of computers, whiteboards, internet, teacher workstations, promethean whiteboards, and projectors. The amount of usage varied according to the activity with levels two and three usage. Level two of technology used by one of the five schools described the use level as *automates traditional teacher and student roles, technology is optional*. Level three of technology used by three of the five schools described the use level as *expands role and/or products, technology is essential.* Figure 6 provides a graphic representation of the aggregate of presentations representing the norms, values, and routines demonstrated by the co-teachers throughout the co-implementation observations.

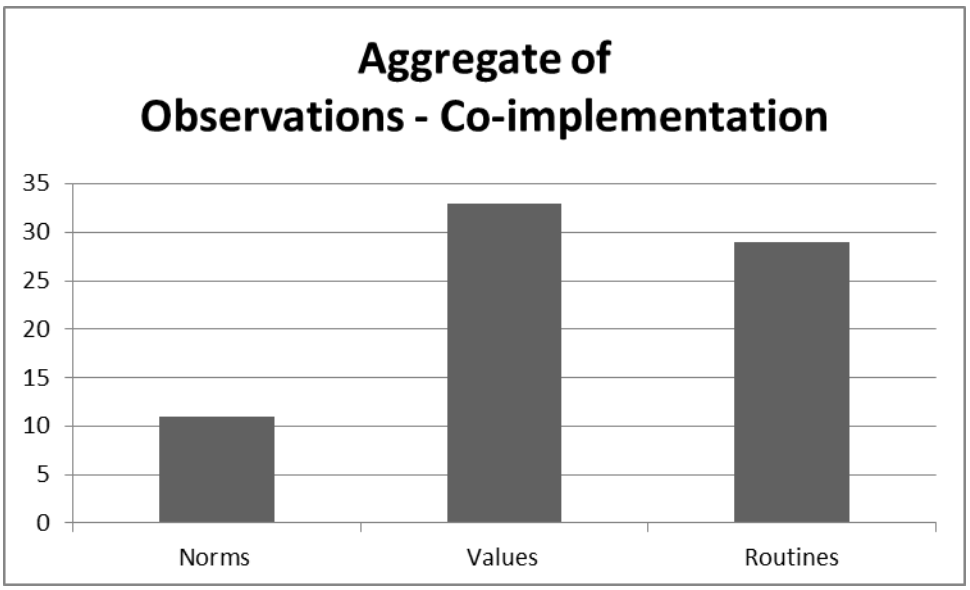

Figure 6: *Aggregate of Norms, Values, and Routines on Co-implementation Observations*

Based on the observation results documented in the five Co-implementation Descriptive/Reflective Protocols (*Appendix H),* themes emerged about the co-implementation sessions which included relationships and communication, implementation of processes and instructional strategies, high expectations, shared responsibilities, and flexibility. As the result of these five observations, the researcher felt that the co-implementation processes in all five schools demonstrated equal effort with both co-teachers fully engaged. Also apparent was the engagement of behavior management and the comfort level between the two co-teachers as they co-taught. There were multiple co-teaching models implemented some of which were whole group, station teaching, team teaching, and one teach/one assist. Evident in two of the classrooms was one of the co-teachers was not present for the entire subject lesson. Even though these two co-teachers co-planned the lesson, they were not a single unit for the entire co-implementation process. Three of the observations evidenced calmness in the room as orchestrated by the co-teachers that was so effective in moving students forward with their lessons. It was quite apparent when the level of activity changed resulting in a lack of calmness

and the students' abilities to attend to task. The lasting impression, from the researcher after these five observations, was that these five co-implementation sessions varied in their presentation while being conducted by positive co-teachers who wanted all of their students to be successful in the co-taught classroom.

Presentations, Interactions, Events. After individual examination of the norms, values, and routines from each of the observations for administrators, co-planning, and co-implementation, the presentations from co-implementation, interactions from co-planning, and events from administrators were compiled. The bar graph in Figure 7 and the pie graph in Figure 8 show graphic representations of the number of presentations (P), interactions (I), and events (E). The pie graph, in particular, demonstrates a visual comparison of the norms, values, and routines as evidenced by the administrators and co-teachers in all five schools. The area of values had the largest percentage at 42 percent, routines were second at 34 percent, and norms were third at 24 percent.

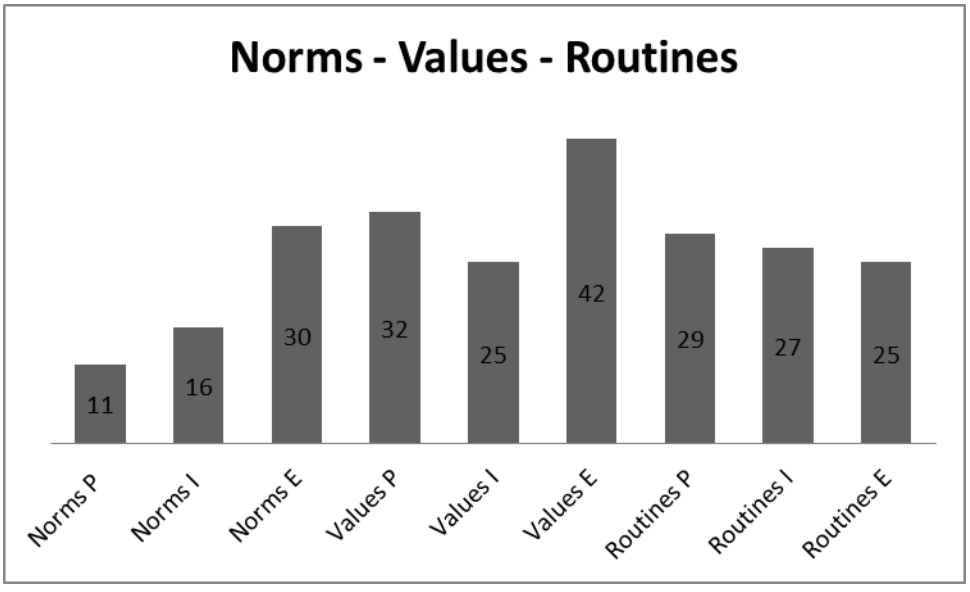

Figure 7: *Presentations, Interactions, and Events for Norms, Values, and Routines*

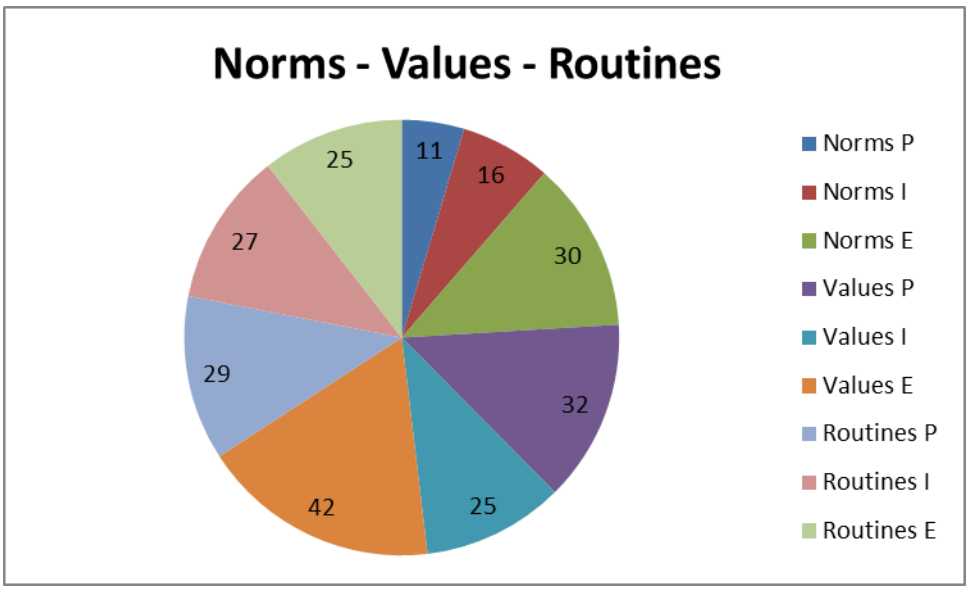

Figure 8: *Pie Chart: Presentations, Interactions, and Events for Norms, Values, and Routines*

Themes. Observations of the elementary staff inclusive of the administrators, general education co-teachers, and special education co-teachers in the environments of the overall school, co-planning, and co-implementation were conducted, coded, and analyzed to derive themes. Based on the observation results documented in the administrator, co-planning, and co-implementation sections above and the need for blending some themes into a single theme, the final themes for the area of observations emerged. These themes included relationships and communication, implementation of processes and instructional strategies and practices, high expectations, shared responsibilities and flexibility, and safe environment. Technology was available and readily used throughout the co-implementation process. This area produced a limited amount of data. Therefore, it was not considered a separate theme but was later included under the resources theme. The resulting themes and details as listed in the above observation categories will be used in conjunction with the interview results to provide answers to the research questions.

Interview Results

Interview Process. All participants (i.e., administrators, general education co-teachers, and special education co-teachers) were interviewed individually in a private room within the natural environment of their designated school buildings. After each interview, a field journal entry was completed that included feelings and thoughts about each experience. Each school was given a two-week window to have all observations and interviews completed. Upon completion of the last interview and within two weeks following the interviews, all interviews were transcribed by the researcher and sent on the same day to the three participants from that particular school. Each participant was expected to complete a member check of his/her interview document and provide comments within a two-week window of receiving the document. Interviews were then coded for norms, values, and routines with emphasis on the presentations, interactions, and events of each. Themes for each interview within each individual school were devised and then compiled. This process was repeated for each school and allowed for noticeable consistent themes to emerge across the five schools.

Question One. Question one consisted of, "Everyone has their own philosophy on teaching and school culture. How do you, as the (e.g., administrator, general education co-teacher, special education co-teacher) perceive your school's culture? How have you carried out your philosophy of education in your role?"

Administrators from all five schools shared perceptions of their individual school's culture. Each described his/her school culture with an emphasis on high expectations, nature of relationships, and implementation of processes. Some responses were norms and others were values when describing the school cultures. One administrator summed up her school culture and how she carried out her philosophy of education in her role. Her response is listed below.

> My philosophy always has been that every kid should have every opportunity as everybody else. Every kid should feel a part of this school regardless of abilities or disabilities. I think our school culture is one that welcomes all kids into a general education classroom. Even our students with the most significant disabilities that are maybe in a zone program have a general education classroom that they are a part of. They eat lunch with that classroom, whether they have adults or assistants with them. They come to assemblies, programs, field trips, all of those things as a part of that classroom. It's almost like each classroom is its own little family. Each grade level is its own little family. And I think that my role as the administrator is to make sure that that continues to happen for all of our kids. I'm fortunate that I have a school culture that everybody feels that way, every teacher wants those kids to be a part of their classroom and they work well together as they're planning events.

Another administrator perceived her school culture as one that was accepting of everybody when she stated,

> I feel like our culture here is very accepting of the special ed children. One thing that has helped with that is we are a very diverse community and school. We have a very high ESL population. We have people here from all different nationalities. And we have different special ed programs here. And with all of that combined, we are accepting of everybody.

Only one administrator described his school culture as being in a transitional period. He attributed this to changes in leadership as directed by the district which created apprehension for school staff. This administrator's perception of his school culture is described here.

> We're in a transitional period in our school culture. The majority of my staff, I think, is going in my direction, where I want the culture to go. There's, a handful who disagree with my philosophy on school culture. It's basic stuff, like every student can learn, every student belongs in a regular ed classroom, and discipline with dignity.

A second part of this question was concerned with how each one carried out his/her philosophy of education in his/her role. This prompted responses in the values and routines categories. Ideas regarding daily practice and openness were shared. The administrator who spoke on daily practice stated,

> I have carried out my philosophy by modeling, as best as possible, and also continuing to dialog with teachers on a regular basis about, how we can best work with all students using the data that we have and making instructional decisions. Some of it is done through presentations and some is informal. Because it's a daily practice, it's ongoing and I just don't think it can be done in one staff meeting once a month but I encourage them to meet with one another as they do weekly in their team meetings and discuss ways that they can best meet the needs of all students.

Another administrator shared how she carried out her role by providing an atmosphere of openness to teachers, students, and parents.

> Looking at school culture, I consider myself, as an administrator, to be

> very open where my door is rarely closed to teachers and to kids. I try to let parents, children, and teachers know that I'm available and I'm open to whatever their issues are. I try to work with them and I try to get to know the children and get them to tell me what's on their mind and what's important to them.

This same question was asked of the general education co-teachers and then the special education co-teachers. The general education co-teachers responded to the question about perception of the school culture with norms and values. Two of the responses were similar and addressed the need to teach all children by exposing them to educational and life experiences in which they had not had the opportunity to participate.

> I perceive school culture here at this school as our values as educators to teach all of the children from where they are and to build their background and experiences from where they were. So, where they are to where they can be successful in applying new experiences through our instruction to help them succeed in any of their academic requests or educational goals. Many of our children come from so many different backgrounds. We need the culture of our children to get to a point where they know more about life. So I feel like our culture is to care and get these children to have experiences through, our exposing them to that. We want them all to be growing from where they are.

Another general education co-teacher shared her perception of the school culture by describing the nature of relationships and expectations among the staff.

> A lot of the staff in the entire school gets along really well. It's one of

> those places where, at staff meetings it's always fun and it's upbeat and it's actually really great. You know, the administrator always tries to keep the meetings short and sweet and it's kind of fun because people kind of throw in their ideas, it's not like a formal meeting, it's more say what's on your mind and that kind of thing. So it's kind of hard to describe when you're not necessarily in there, but I just think the whole school in general, it's just a very friendly and outgoing kind of place where people get along. And obviously people have disagreements about things, but I think it's handled in a way that people still are friendly with one another.

Two general education co-teachers carried out their philosophies of education in their roles with high expectations and flexibility. Responses were in the values and routines categories and described dedication and responsibility on the part of the teachers. The co-teacher who spoke on dedication stated,

> I think we have a lot of very dedicated teachers here who work way past our contract hours to get these kids where they need to go. I frequently leave here past 5:30 and there are still ten, twelve, fifteen vehicles in the parking lot. So, I know it's not just me. It's a good number of the staff. I know every year we have people who are bringing in stuff for kids who don't have stuff for the holidays or volunteering their time in keeping kids to tutor after school, because I do that, and it's not for pay. We just know that we need to get these kids where they need to go. I have discussed with other teachers and I'm pretty sure almost all the grade levels have

kept students after. So, I don't know if it's a norm but it's a value definitely that a lot of these teachers see where the students need to go and we know we can't just do it with the twenty kids in the classroom at one time. So, we have to keep them after school sometimes and put in that time.

It was the general education co-teacher who spoke on responsibility that shared,

I still personally hold the kids accountable for respecting adults, making sure they take responsibility, making sure they try to think through things on whatever level they come in the moment they walk in my door. So, like for a special ed child, like my one student who has some social issues, we have to take him at that level and try to move him forward with working on those social skills. Those needs are going to be different from a regular education child. So, just try to move the students along on their path as best I can with still meeting the standards of the state.

The special education co-teachers described the cultures in their schools as diverse which required them to take on multiple roles. One teacher stated,

This school is a very diverse school and a lot of students bring a lot of different things to our school making our culture very different from any other school that I've ever been to. My philosophy of education is to teach every child for what they need and where they're at. And so at this school, that doesn't differ any because they all have different needs. They all have different levels that they're at whether it's speaking English or whether it's a disability that they're dealing with. And so for me, it's all

about teaching them where they are and what they need. It's very diverse in the classroom based on what those students' needs are, and based on who those students are and what they need at that time.

The roles the special education teachers were often required to participate in were described as,

I think our school culture lacks a lot of parent support and involvement. So, we the teachers have to fill, not just the teacher role, but the roll of the nurse, the mom, the dad, the brother, the sister, the grandma. The students come to school lacking social skills, manners, and background knowledge. I mean, they have rough lives and in order to teach them, you have to, not necessarily understand their life because you haven't probably lived it at eight or nine, but you have to accept that that's where they are that day and teach around it.

Two of these five schools had special education co-teachers who had philosophies which involved nature of relationships and behavior management. Responses were in the values and routines categories. The co-teacher who spoke on nature of the relationships stated,

I think my philosophy is that the teachers I work with, we work together, we're a team, they're our children. I think that I try to help the students with disabilities be successful. I think that I try to be kind to them and understand that they do have disabilities in different areas. And I think the teachers are also kind about that too. We just try to help the students with disabilities be as successful as we can through accommodations, modifications, and just working with them with review and things like that.

Another special education co-teacher discussed behavior management with a positive tone. She shared,

> When I come to school, my philosophy is, treat every child the same. So I treat all of these children as if they were my own children. I don't yell at my own children because I don't believe in yelling. So I don't yell at the children. I do talk directly to my children. So, I talk directly to these children. I don't classify the children in a different category as I classify my own children because they're all children. My purpose here is to teach everyone as a whole, disability or not. Despite your disability, despite your home life, despite what you have or what you don't have, I treat every child as if I'm treating my own because I want my children to get the same at their own school. I want their teacher to respect them. I want their teacher to love them. I want their teacher to hear them. Because as adults, we think children don't have a voice. We think they don't have feelings. If you want respect, you gotta give it. If you want them to say yes, please, and thank you, I'm a believer that we have to say yes, please, and thank you.

All participants had perceptions about their individual school's culture. Many of these individuals also commented about classroom culture. Only one administrator addressed classroom culture with the following,

> The collaborative special education teacher that goes in works with everybody, not just the four special education students that are in there. She works with everybody. The classroom teacher works with everybody.

> So, it's not, oh this teacher's in here just to work with these four students. My teachers are very good in their grouping and they group with different levels. So that not all four of the special ed students are with this teacher to work with this problem.

There were several co-teachers that addressed classroom culture. One special education co-teacher commented on the shared teaching routine while another shared how the implementation of the processes or the norm impacted all students in the classroom. The shared teaching was described as,

> The students understand that we're both teachers. They understand that we're both there to help them. The general education teacher is in there more so they would go to her but they will come to me with anything that they feel that they need help with. We all work together and that's how they see us.

Implementation of the processes impacted development of the classroom culture. One general education co-teacher described her class processes with ways that the students with disabilities and the students without disabilities worked together. She said,

> One of the hard things, especially with the special education group, because some of the kids do things that aren't really what the other kids see as normal. In general, whenever one of the children with disabilities is having one of their moments, it's nice to see that the kids are so sweet and caring towards them. And I think they get that after working in groups with them. It's nice to see too hat when the students get to pick their partners that sometimes they want to help the kids that are having

problems because they want to be that support.

The administrators, general education co-teachers, and special education co-teachers involved in this study were forthcoming about their school and classroom cultures, and how they carried out their philosophies of education in their current roles. Overall, these responses included norms, values, and routines. Inclusion of students with disabilities was evident in all schools through the use of co-teaching models with some pull-out models as needed.

The researcher could tell that the individuals in these three roles were child-focused. Equal opportunity of exposure to the general education environment for students with disabilities was evident in the interview responses regarding perception of school culture. In addition, friendly and outgoing staff with good relationships and a willingness to take on multiple roles was considered part of each one's positive school culture. It was apparent that these individuals carried out their philosophies by creating an atmosphere of openness which invited communication. They were very dedicated individuals who gave freely of their personal time and worked in teams to support students, while holding each student responsible for his/her performance.

Question Two. Question two consisted of, "What is your perception of the impact of this school's culture on practices of inclusion for students with disabilities?"

Administrators from the five schools shared their perceptions of the impact that their individual school's culture has on inclusion. Responses were norms and values with emphasis on risk-taking, high expectations, nature of relationships, and implementation of processes. Two administrators talked about being realistic and meeting the needs of the students with disabilities. One stated,

I think the culture allows for students with disabilities to be in general

> ed as much as possible. But certainly realizing there are times where the gen ed teacher needs to say, OK you take these kids and you go work with them because you know how to do that and I've done it in every way I could possibly think of to do. So I think our culture does help support the inclusion of students with disabilities.

A similar but more detailed response with this emphasis came from a different administrator when she said,

> The teachers are willing to participate in any inclusion activities. In some instances it typically falls back on that old status of the special ed teacher falling back to help that student, and that's because some needs are stronger than others. They need to do that direct instruction while that student is in the classroom. So, we've been trying to be creative regarding how we are being inclusive of our practices in relation to the student's needs. Even though the co-teaching and the inclusion model is ideal, sometimes it just depends on the cohort of students that you have on that grade level.

When considering the school culture and the practice of inclusion, one administrator addressed the need for appropriately matching general education and special education teachers. Without this consideration, classes involving the concept of co-teaching were challenged and struggled with meeting successful outcomes. He shared,

> I think that what we're trying to do is match up classrooms. I think the general ed teacher who is the inclusion teacher, can't just be your best teacher on that grade level. It's got to be the person who wants to have

> those kinds of kids and wants to work with somebody else and is comfortable sharing their classroom. I took, arguably my best fourth grade teacher last year and made her the collab teacher, and it didn't work. We were very honest with each other that this was not a good fit, and I'll admit I kind of forced that and thought that was the best situation. So your teacher with the best test scores isn't necessarily the best collab teacher. I think we did a lot better job this year of matching up regular ed teachers that are embracing inclusion. I think my special ed teachers are coming around. I think that some of the more veteran special ed teachers still want to do more pull-out than I'd like. They want that control. They think that they know how their kids learn best.

The administrators shared events that they valued which were occurring in their schools that supported inclusion of students with disabilities. Ideas were shared about getting to know all the other students in the classroom. One of these ideas included,

> Something that we do at the beginning of the year, for the first month of school, we have structured play at recess. Here your partner today might be me but tomorrow when we go out to recess, you might be with somebody else. Then that way, everybody gets to know one another. Then the last five minutes or so of recess, they can do whatever they want to do.

One of the schools was instituting a change in the process for selection for participants in the school talent show. This change promoted inclusion of all students. As the administrator said,

> I like to include everybody and I don't want to exclude anybody. This

> year instead of having a talent show, we're gonna have a variety show and we're accepting every child that applies to enter it. We're just gonna run it for two nights. That way every child gets to do their thing versus being told no I'm sorry you don't qualify for the talent show. Every parent likes to see their own child perform and thinks that their child is a wonderful performer. So, we're going to give them the opportunity.

The general education co-teachers responded to question two about their perceptions of the school culture and how the school culture impacts the inclusion for students with disabilities. Implementation of processes in the areas of norms was evident. Routines appeared regarding both the school and classroom cultures which involved effective communication and shared responsibilities. Two general education co-teachers emphasized how the process of inclusion supported the school culture and provided supports for all students. One teacher stated,

> Because of our culture, it's a direct impact on what our practices are. We are spending time in this particular school and the inclusion for students working on some things that you may not work on in another school with a different culture, such as building up the background knowledge. When some children can't read a word, it might be due to phonics. Even if they can decipher the word and pronounce it, a lot of these children that I'm seeing don't know what the word means. The words are on grade level, but that's what the culture of this school is and it influences our practices. I think that it has a lot to do with how we include the students. And I think bringing the students into the general education classroom gives them more of these kinds of background knowledge experiences and

opportunities. It provides learning from each other.

Another general education co-teacher provided a response which addressed the extra supports that inclusion provided for all her students. She shared,

> I feel like inclusion is such a big thing for us, for all the kids. A lot of the times I don't even think about it as my inclusion kids, my sped kids. It's not just the students with disabilities that need the extra support, it's all of the students. So I think it helps that we have just this value that we want all the kids to be where they need to be or make some kind of growth. You know, the more the better. We need to get them from here to here. It's not just the regular ed kids, it's also those special ed kids that need it. So, I think because of the school culture, most everybody works night and day to get these kids where they need to be. It's almost like inclusion is just kind of normal.

A third general education co-teacher talked about the routines within the classroom that stemmed from the school culture and supported her classroom culture. Her preference was to have the students remain in the natural environment of the general education classroom with support from special education. Her response was,

> For the school's culture and practices of inclusion, first of all, including them that they're not being pulled out as much, they're not being pulled more than they're in. I love that. I love that the special education co-teacher comes in or her aides come into the classroom. The students with disabilities might have pull-out for testing, but we're learning to work together for them. I'm working with the students, because with having the

students leave, I'm not getting what I want to do with them and vice versa. Also, when she's in here, she's not only having the kids that have IEPs, but she's helping everybody. We're really learning to work together.

The special education teachers were asked question number two. Their responses were values around how the school has become more inclusive for students with disabilities and routines regarding practices for differentiation. The teacher, whose emphasis was on the values, stated,

> I think the impact of the school's culture on inclusion is starting to change. The tides are starting to turn with gen ed teachers being willing to accept the students with disabilities into their classes. The general education teachers know that their names are going to be on those scores and that's been a hard part for a lot of gen ed teachers to want to accept that score that comes along with probably in their mind a not smart kid. And I'm really blessed to be with the two teachers that I am, because they love my kids. And that's a huge thing, because when you're with people that don't really want the special education students, it's noticeable.

Two special education co-teachers addressed practices for differentiation and how the school culture impacts these practices. The first teacher shared,

> I'm sure the school culture does have an impact on how we do things. However, I think with the general education co-teacher and myself, we are so focused on who the kids are as individuals, not so much thinking of the bigger picture. We just see them for who they are in that classroom. We meet whatever need that they have. So, I'm sure the school culture does

have an impact in the big picture, but I feel like we see them. I mean taking into account where they're coming from is our big key. And knowing that some have more support at home than others and being able to factor that in. So I guess the school culture really does have an impact on how we play in and how we teach based upon what we know they're like outside of school and inside of school is gonna result from that.

The second special education co-teacher, with a focus on differentiation also, discussed the practice of placing unrealistic numbers of students with disabilities in the co-taught classrooms and how it impacts success. She stated,

> The co-teaching part helps with differentiation, because you have somebody who can come in and you can do the multilevel groups. The classrooms that don't have a co-teacher in there, some of them do multilevel groups, some of them are still in the old fashioned direct instruction of the classroom because everybody should be able to do this. That's not reality. So then when you throw the special education students in there that are below the average, and the average in the classes right now has dropped anyway, the general education teachers are going, Oh my gosh they can't do anything! Well, yes they can if your expectations are that they do it. But the numbers in some of the classes are such that, it's easier to give you an answer, it's easier to tell you how to spell it, it's easier for me to write it for you than to wait for you to write that answer or wait you out to put that answer down, and wait for you to respond to me. So, the idea of inclusion is that the students with disabilities are in

the general education classroom. But in some of the classrooms, the numbers that are in there don't really allow you to still be able to do what needs to be done.

Administrators, general education co-teachers, and special education co-teachers involved in this study were demonstrative about their school and classroom cultures and how their cultures impacted practices of inclusion. Throughout this question, a focus on inclusion of students with disabilities within the school and classroom remained at the forefront. Norms, values, and routines were evident throughout the responses and included implementation of processes, high expectations, nature of the relationships, effective communication, and shared responsibilities. These responses reiterated the need for blending the school culture and inclusion of students with disabilities in order to provide a supportive school environment for all students.

From the responses and body language of the participants during the interview process, the researcher was able to tell that everyone was supportive of some level of inclusion for students with disabilities. These levels of inclusion did not include full inclusion. This was because each participant thought that meeting each student's needs was the most important factor to consider. Another important factor was appropriately matching two co-teachers who had the desire to work with students with disabilities in an inclusive environment. Areas to consider were personalities, dedication, and the ability to work together for the benefit of all students with and without disabilities to meet their unique needs. So, it was evident that being able to include all students through use of multilevel groups and to accept the co-teachers' various roles in the individual school cultures would create a normal inclusive environment for all students and staff within the individual schools.

Question Three. Question three consisted of, "What do you perceive as effective and not effective practices at this school for first co-planning and second co-implementation?"

Administrators from the five schools shared their perceptions of effective and not effective practices for co-planning and co-implementation. Responses for co-planning were in the categories of values and routines. Effective co-planning emphasized effective communication and nature of the relationships. Co-teachers needed to communicate as shared by the administrators in the following comments,

> *A lot of times what I see is maybe a general ed teacher or a special ed teacher finding that courage to have a courageous conversation in co-planning with I need to talk with you about the way the delivery is coming. If they can have that partnership, that's good.
>
> **The co-planning becomes that give and take. You know what's gonna work for you and why that works for you and trying to get teachers to have those conversations without my associate principal or I having to have those conversations with them.
>
> ***The teachers who are involved in the co-planning, they're effective because they're open and willing to share and are able to tell one another constructively any feedback that needs to occur. They're honest about what students need and how they need help.

Administrators also felt that effective co-planning resulted when rapport was established between the co-teaching partners. One administrator stated,

> So, first of all the special education co-teacher has to develop relationships with those general education teachers, because it's hard to co-teach with

> someone you don't know. I feel like the relationship, confidence in each other, and the rapport that you have with each other could also make a difference in how well you teach together.

Not effective practices for co-planning from the lens of the administrators had responses for co-planning in the categories of values and routines. Not effective co-planning resulted in a lack of resources and a lack of communication. Regarding the lack of resources, one administrator said, "The co-teachers typically plan after school. We don't have common planning time because of the resource schedule and the shared resource teachers with other schools. So, it's not possible to have a common planning time." Another administrator commented on the lack of communication. He stated,

> A not effective practice is where you're afraid to speak up in co-planning. The co-teachers are afraid to speak up because they have to work so closely with the other person. If there is an issue, I'm finding that each co-teacher is less likely to confront the other person directly. Instead the co-teachers want to come to me, or come to the other administrator. That's gonna make it worse if teacher A comes to me about special ed teacher B. The co-teachers need to get to a point where if the special ed teacher disagrees with the way something's being presented, or the amount of material or whatever it may be, the special ed teacher needs to speak up and advocate for the special ed side of things and then vice versa. If the classroom teacher feels like, you know what, these kids really can do this and I think it's important that the students do something a certain way that the co-teachers talk about that and come to an agreement on it.

> Because what's really not effective is when the classroom teacher says and does it one way and then the special ed teacher goes in and either undermines that or changes that, or vice versa. That happens both ways. Then you just end up with too many cooks in the kitchen.

Administrators' responses for co-implementation were in the categories of values and routines. Effective co-implementation emphasized high expectations and shared responsibilities. In the area of high expectations, an administrator stated, "I think just setting the expectation of you will both be seen as the teacher in that classroom. That the kids will see you up there teaching. I think that has helped our co-teaching be effective." Several administrators addressed the co-teachers shared responsibilities during co-implementation. An administrator was explicit in her description of this process when she said,

> When I go into a room that I can see the exceptional ed staff and the teacher are all working and engaged with kids. Are there times where one is standing back? Absolutely! Sometimes that's the gen ed teacher standing back while the exceptional ed teacher is doing something. So to me that's effective co-implementation if you walk in the room and you see that. Yesterday we had a visitor and walked in a classroom and there were two adults working in the room. The visitor didn't know who was the gen ed teacher and who was the exceptional ed teacher. That's effective to me when you can't tell that.

Not effective practices for co-implementation from the lens of the administrators had responses in the category of values and addressed the lack of nature of the relationships between the

co-teachers. An administrator described an event that demonstrated the lack of nature of the relationships. She shared,

> Well I think of one circumstance that I saw that was not effective where the special ed teacher got up and kind of took charge. It became, this is 'my way' to do it. So the special education co-teacher is taking control of the classroom where it should be a blended classroom and the co meaning of you and I together rather than I'm doing this and this is the way that I see the technique being done. So, just like anything else, kind of like a marriage. The general ed teacher resented it and I don't think was very prepared for it.

The general education co-teachers responded to question three about their perceptions of effective and not effective practices for co-planning and co-implementation. In the area of effective practices for co-planning, norms were evident in the implementation of the processes, values showed with the nature of the relationships, and routines exposed effective communication. A general education co-teacher looked at the implementation of the processes when she stated,

> Effective practices for the co-planning are definitely setting a day every week that you meet and you touch base on what you're doing. Every Monday we meet as a grade level but usually the special education co-teacher and I will split off and talk specifically about reading, because that's when she's in here. It's nice to kind of throw ideas together, listen to what the group's doing but also try to figure out what's right for us.

The nature of the relationship was evident with a comment from a general education co-teacher. She shared,

> Definitely communication is the key because if you're not talking with that person with what they have on their mind when you go to co-implement, the lesson doesn't go smoothly. But also getting into the routine because at the beginning of the year when we would plan, it would take a lot longer. We'd be bouncing ideas back and forth and we had to kind of compromise so that we were both comfortable.

Effective communication was apparent when the co-teachers completed their weekly planning. The general education co-teacher describe the co-planning as,

> I just feel like me and my partner have such a great bond. I know for us it works really well when we sit down and for the week, just go subject by subject. It's more of a conversation between the two of us, like what do you think will work, what do you think will not work. We meet as a grade level first and share ideas, and the special education co-teacher is with me in grade level. Then we come back in the general education classroom and plan the week out.

Not effective practices for co-planning from the lens of the general education teacher yielded responses in the categories of values and routines. Not effective co-planning resulted in a lack of resources and a lack of communication. Regarding the lack of resources, one general education co-teacher shared,

> For co-planning, time I think is the biggest issue. We're pulled in so many different directions, that there's not always time to do it as we know

> philosophically what is the best to do. We don't always have the time to do that. So, it is a lot more on the fly, just surviving.

A different general education co-teacher commented on the lack of resources and difficulties with time to co-plan when she shared,

> We're having to spend our own time co-planning, which we're happy to do, but there are things that come up that you can't avoid. Oftentimes, somebody inserts another meeting in our time and we get bumped. When we get bumped which happens maybe every third week, then that spoils our plans to be in sync and know what the other one is doing. It's very difficult with my other meeting dates and her other meeting dates to coordinate a day together.

Lack of effective communication was noticed with attempts to use alternate means of communication to co-plan. A general education co-teacher describes these as,

> We tried to do a lot of email planning, which was not effective because, there was just not enough details that were put into it. I think sometimes if you split up the days of the week, like I would plan Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday, and the other person would plan Thursday-Friday. That didn't work because obviously the person that wasn't there doesn't know what's going on when you're trying to teach the lesson together. You can send typed up what you're gonna do but then that person's like, well how is that gonna come through. Also it doesn't make it consistent. I like starting easy and working it towards a harder skill during the end of the week. So that definitely didn't work.

In the area of effective practices for co-implementation, implementation of the processes identified the norms, values were evident with the high expectations, and shared responsibilities were acknowledged in the routines. A general education co-teacher shared implementation of the processes when she stated,

> If the special education co-teacher is up at the board, I'm gonna be roaming and helping with whomever, and she's gonna do the same thing if I'm at the board. I think she and I know each other well enough that we do feel comfortable with whoever is at the board taking the reins and the other one stepping back. I don't get my feelings hurt as a classroom teacher if she goes up there, because she comes with a different way to explain it than I might. This can help not just the special ed kids but any of them.

Another general education co-teacher addressed effective practices for co-implementation with emphasis on high expectations. She shared,

> We value the same things. If we know that this one student is throwing a fit, we're not going to let him get up. He's not leaving. He's gonna stay and do his work. But if we know that this one is gonna explode, then we both know, OK, this one we're gonna have this many times that we're gonna speak to him and then he can be excused. So, I love that she's gonna speak to the same one the same amount of times that I am. And we're both gonna look at that kid and know what we want him to do, because we're not gonna have them play one teacher against the other. They're trying! And they know that we're just alike.

A general education co-teacher showed shared responsibilities when she demonstrated the path taken by the two co-teachers when technology was not available for the lesson. She shared,

> For example, today on my plans, we were going to be all in here together and the students were each gonna have a computer. I had set the computers to a read aloud format so that all the questions are in the same order. So the students who could read would be fine, but the students who couldn't read could follow with me on the board. Technology sometimes doesn't work in your favor and I had an email that said you can't use this program today, something's gone wrong. So, we looked at each other and real quick we're like, all right, well how about you take your five that need to work on non-fiction text features with this form that we had worked on. In here with the rest of them, we worked in partners and I was able to just walk around. It wasn't exactly what we had planned to do and it didn't exactly match, but we've planned enough that we have back up, I guess you would say. So we have something that we can always pull and kind of roll with it.

Not effective practices for co-implementation from the lens of the general education co-teacher yielded responses in the categories of norms, values, and routines. Not effective co-implementation resulted in not implementing processes appropriately, lack of nature of relationships, and lack of shared responsibilities. Regarding not implementing processes appropriately, one general education co-teacher shared, "If I have no idea what she was doing with her kids and I don't know if she's on my pacing. I would think that that would be not very effective."

Lack of nature of relationships were evident when the general education co-teacher shared that,

> The special education students are my kids too. I need to know where they are and what they're doing in each of the content areas. So, I think if we didn't co-plan together then co-implementation would be not effective because she wouldn't know what I was doing and I certainly wouldn't know what she was doing necessarily or where those kids were.

Finally, lack of shared responsibilities was seen when the special education co-teacher was not co-teaching as described by the general education co-teacher with,

> I think something that doesn't necessarily work is if one person is taking the lead and the other person doesn't feel comfortable, jumping in and adding something to the lesson, because I think that defeats the purpose. I think sometimes it's easy for one person to just sit back and kind of watch. That's not even co-teaching.

The special education co-teachers responded to question three about their perceptions of effective and not effective practices for co-planning and co-implementation. In the area of effective practices for co-planning, values showed in the nature of relationships and routines were plentiful with emphasis on effective communication. A special education co-teacher referred to nature of the relationships when she stated,

> At this point, the general education co-teacher has done most of the pulling of materials. We meet throughout the week. So, we do talk through things. A lot of her ideas, she does come up with and when she shows them to me, they're usually something that I think would be great for my students. I don't feel that I could do anything better. What she has

> is planned, is great. So a lot of times she does offer things, but that's not to say that I don't offer things. Sometimes we talk about it and she'll say, well that might be a little too easy, and it will be because that's my mindset. They're gonna struggle with that so let's give them a different one.

All the special education co-teachers referenced the need for effective communication. They referred to communication as a key element in making co-planning effective. One co-teacher stated,

> With effective co-planning, you have to have a relationship. You don't have to be friends, but you have to have a relationship. You have to communicate. I'm not just talking about in that classroom. You can go in that classroom and co-teach and never smile at each other, not even speak to each other, but I think you have to have a relationship outside of that classroom. I may need to put a bug in your ear, you may need to put a bug in my ear, so we have to be able to communicate. Communication, Communication! I'm a big believer in that, because I'm not a know-it-all. I will ask for help in a minute and vice versa. So if I don't understand something that the general education co-teacher is doing, I'm going to ask her and I'm gonna tell her, 'Oh whoa, I don't know, slow down.' And I'm hoping in return, she'll do the same thing for me. So, to me communication is the one key thing that we have to have that is an effective practice.

Another special education co-teacher consolidated her team planning and co-planning sessions. She shared,

> What I do with my teachers is we meet as a team because I work with two teachers on the same grade level which is really much better to have for planning purposes. It's worked out well this year for me in that respect that I only have two teachers to plan with and they're in the same grade. We plan together on Mondays and we plan as a group what topic we're gonna cover. Then the co-teacher that I teach Reading with, we'll do a little sidebar and we'll figure out exactly what we're going to do specifically for each day. So we talk back and forth about it and pull things together and we co-plan.

The need for effective communication was also evident when a special education co-teacher said,

> We went through each subject during co-planning. I understood what the special education students were gonna be responsible for. I was able to get the materials I needed, so that I can modify them, so that the special education students could be successful. So I feel in that co-planning session, as long as we're both on the same page and understand what's going on, it's effective. That I'm provided with things to modify or at least see them, so I know what the special education students are gonna be expected to tackle during the week and then understanding who is going to teach what. We're gonna do these five things, but what do you want me to do, what are you gonna do, what are we gonna do as a team together at the same time? So understanding who's responsible for what.

Not effective practices for co-planning through the lens of the special education co-teacher yielded responses in the categories of norms with not implementing processes appropriately, values with lack of resources, and routines with lack of shared responsibilities. Regarding not implementing processes appropriately, one special education co-teacher stated,

> The not effective practice for co-planning would be because we really just don't have the time. We only get together one day a week because I work with three different grade levels. So, that leaves me two out of the five days. But it's really 20 or 30 minutes and it's not a lot of in-depth planning that way, which is not the most effective way to do it. So that doesn't allow me to have as much time into it. I don't have time to take on the responsibility of planning for the co-taught classroom when I have four other classes that I have to plan for myself anyway. So, I think the load that I have on myself also makes it not effective for being a co-teacher.

Another special education co-teacher shared information about the lack of resources as being a not effective practice when she said, "It just comes down to time. We stay late because we don't have time in the day to co-plan. Without co-planning, I don't think co-teaching can work. But at an elementary school level, we don't have the time." In the area of routines, the special education co-teachers shared responses regarding lack of shared responsibilities. One co-teacher stated,

> I think a not effective practice for co-planning would be a meeting that is short and sweet. Here are the topics, I'm not sure what I'm doing yet, so when you come in you'll see what's going on. I've had that happen

before.

Another special education co-teacher shared,

> Not effective for co-planning is not being a full time teacher. And why I say that is, I'm part time. I love being part time because it works for my family. However, we have to plan on the fly. We plan via email. We plan via text. And there's nothing wrong with that because we're still communicating. Materials, I'll leave them in her mailbox, she'll leave them in my mailbox, and we'll review things. So, we can't sit down together and co-plan.

In the area of effective practices for co-implementation, implementation of the processes identified the norms and shared responsibilities and flexibility were acknowledged in the routines. A special education co-teacher shared implementation of the processes when she stated,

> We move together all the time. At the beginning of the year, we really stress structure, organization, and routine. My kids may not be able to tell time, but they know based on the clock, this is where we're supposed to be doing. When we get to this place, this is what we're supposed to do. When we get to computer station, we don't come and tell me something's not working, you fix it yourself because we've taught you how to do it. If you can't figure it out, then there's somebody beside you. The promethean board routine doesn't change. They always do the same things in the same order. It may be a different worksheet, it may be a different game on a computer, you may be reading a different story, but

> you do the same things in the same order every single day. So, I don't have to question what group do I have because I know. The general education co-teacher doesn't have to question what group she has. The students know, the co-teachers know, it's continuous throughout the whole day from one thing to the other. And my kids thrive 100% on routine, structure, and organization.

Two special education co-teachers presented thoughts about shared responsibilities. One co-teacher stated,

> I think the general education teacher and I do a really good job of being able to bounce off of each other and what's going on in the classroom. She can be doing instruction, but I can see where somebody's not getting something and be able to interject what's going on. Or I will be leading part of the class discussion and she can walk around the room and see who's doing stuff. When we do small groups, and small group activities, and small group instruction, she's usually with one group of kids and I'll be with another one. It doesn't have to be, I only get the special ed kids and she gets all of the regular kids. It's just, that classroom is our classroom. It really doesn't matter whose kids they are.

The second special education co-teacher shared,

> An effective practice for co-implementation is sticking to the plan. I think in order for it to be successful you both have to understand really what your plan was. Like you've planned it all but then being able to follow it and then being flexible of, hey that really didn't go like we expected, how

> can we change it right here on the spot and fix it and make it flow the way we need it to. And we've had to do that. We'll just look at each other and go, we're not ready for this. So for us, we've just gotten really comfortable with figuring out what's working, what's not, and going in whatever direction we need to go. We need to back up or this is really too easy, we need to press forward.

Not effective practices for co-implementation through the lens of the special education co-teacher yielded responses in the categories of values with lack of nature of relationships, and routines with lack of communication. Regarding lack of nature of relationships, one special education co-teacher shared,

> I do all the special ed responsibilities. And I don't think the general education co-teachers have really moved into that piece of it. They'll read a test if they need to or do that but as far as collecting any data that might need to be collected, that's all of our responsibilities to do. I think special ed has become more like we're sharing regular ed, but regular ed doesn't take any of our responsibilities, except within the classroom as far as reading tests or doing those things.

Another special education co-teacher talked about lack of respect between teachers and the need to create a new color for the co-teachers. She stated,

> I think sometimes there's that sense of lack of respect and almost fighting for control. This really affects that classroom environment and affects the co-planning and the co-implementation. If you can't agree on even a simple thing, as you can't agree on how you're gonna teach it, that's

> gonna affect your co-implementation when it comes to it. If you're gonna do it this way and she was gonna do it that way, it's gonna be a problem. I don't think the general education co-teacher and I have that problem, but I have seen it with other people at this school. I think it just comes down to personality and if you can just kind of blend your personality, and you almost have to. The general education co-teacher is definitely much more laid back, calm. I'm not, I'm the opposite to her. But we've kind of figured out a way to blend those colors together to make it a new color. And I think sometimes at this school, the general education teachers are very strong at what they want their color to be and are not willing to blend it into that middle ground color.

Regarding lack of communication, one special education co-teacher stated,

> There have been times where I'm not provided ahead of time with what the general education co-teacher would like to be done. So when I walk in the room, it's like, we're gonna do stations today, here's your station, you're gonna be in charge of that. Then I have no idea what I'm doing. I haven't had time to prepare to make it an engaged lesson, or fun and exciting. I just sit here and read a paper together with the students. The lesson wouldn't be implemented in the way it was supposed to be.

Administrators, general education co-teachers, and special education co-teachers involved in this study were demonstrative about their perceptions of effective and not effective practices for co-planning and co-implementation. Their focus was effective and not effective practices for co-planning and co-implementation. Implementation of processes, nature of

relationships, high expectations, effective communication, shared responsibilities, and flexibility were included as effective practices for both co-planning and co-implementation. Not implementing processes appropriately, lack of resources, lack of nature of relationships, lack of effective communication, and lack of shared responsibilities were included as not effective practices for both co-planning and co-implementation. Throughout the responses these norms, values, and routines reverberated without reservation. Figure 9 provides a graphic representation of a comparison of effective and not effective practices for co-planning versus co-implementation as described by the participants.

The researcher heard effective and not effective practices for both co-planning and co-implementation voiced by the participants during the interviews. The ideas of communicating effectively, having good relationships, being on the same page, and sharing roles and responsibilities were evidenced and created positive results for co-teaching. The most frequent not effective practice noted was lack of time to co-plan. This was present in every elementary school involved in the study. Other practices that were seen as not effective and led the researcher to ponder were relationships that resulted in one co-teacher being afraid to voice her opinion, fighting for control of the classroom, and the special education co-teachers' belief that responsibilities were not shared equally between the two teachers. It was apparent to the researcher that these individuals were emphatic about their beliefs of effective and not effective practices for co-planning and co-implementation. As a result, practices varied in the five schools, but more effective than not effective practices were being used.

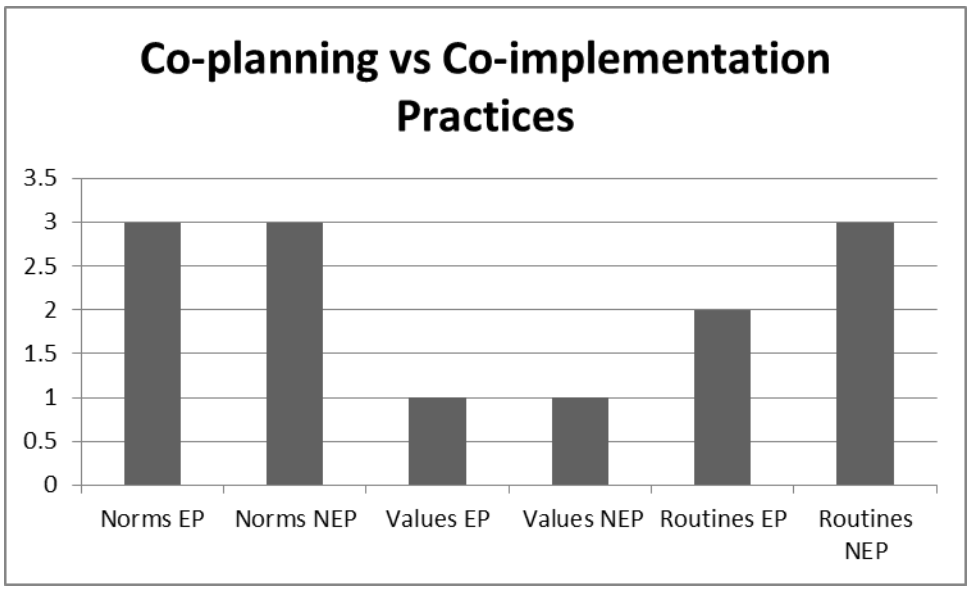

Figure 9: *Co-planning vs Co-implementation Practices*

Question Four. Question four consisted of, "What is your perception of the (a) administrator's, (b) general education co-teacher's, or (c) special education co-teacher's role and its impact on effective and not effective practices for co-planning?

Administrators from the five schools shared their perceptions of the roles about the administrator, general education co-teacher, and special education co-teacher at the respective schools and each individual's impact on effective and not effective practices for co-planning. Responses in regard to administrators for effective practices fell in the categories of first, values with an emphasis on provision of resources and high expectations and second, routines with emphasis on effective communication. In the area of high expectations, one administrator stated,

> I think my role sets the tone. I think it goes back to what the expectations are. If you have an administrator, as I've had myself in the past, that just doesn't have an expectation for it, you're not gonna rise to that. I think if you have an administrator whose expectation is like mine where I want you both to be seen as teachers in that room, and I want you to both take

> responsibility for those kids. I think that is part of my role is to make sure that the co-teachers understand the expectations.

A second administrator spoke on provision of resources. She shared,

> My role, I feel is one that is supportive of the co-teachers' time. I try to allot for them to have as much time as possible if they need something. I also try to provide them with as much resources as possible, like if there's a training that they can go to that will assist them co-plan. Then we sit down together a lot to look at students' abilities and what they need, to adjust the schedule for co-planning and co-teaching to occur. That's for both, for general and special education. I don't have a problem necessarily adjusting the schedules as long as it's not impacting too many other grade levels. Just so that they can still maintain their time allotments that's required for their instruction.

In the area of effective communication, an administrator was thoughtful about her role and the co-teaching process. She said, "I think my role though is to recognize where things are not working well and to brainstorm with the teachers exactly what we can do to fix it and to get it going back, better." There were not effective practices for co-planning listed from the administrators. These fell in the categories of values with emphasis on lack of high expectations and the routines with emphasis on lack of effective communication. Regarding the lack of high expectations, one administrator said,

> I don't go to co-planning meetings. And part of that is because I think that those are not as formally set. Those teachers have figured out, oh I think we've got a lunch time together, or I can come hit you during specials or

this day works for us. I think that co-planning isn't as set in stone scheduling wise as grade level planning. And maybe it needs to be, because that co-planning between the two teachers sometimes gets shoe horned in other places just because of time.

Another administrator addressed lack of effective communication as a not effective practice for co-planning when she stated,

Not effective practices for co-planning comes back to just time, just not enough time to adequately sit down and talk about what the kids need, how we're gonna adjust a lesson. So, sometimes it becomes the, all right, I want you to plan for these eight kids, three of whom are general ed. But sometimes it's like co-planning takes place separately because there's just not enough time to sit down and go, OK this is what I'm gonna do, how about this, what do you think about this. So, sometimes it happens separately and then it's the communication piece there to make sure the co-teachers are on the same page.

When administrators were asked to list their perceptions of the general education co-teachers' roles and how their general education co-teachers' roles impacted effective and not effective practices for co-planning, the responses only involved effective practices and no not effective practices were given. The effective practices regarding general education co-teachers fell in the categories of norms for implementation of processes and routines for effective communication. In the area of implementation of processes, one administrator stated,

What the general education co-teacher and the special education co-teacher can do during co-planning is take the data from last year to see

> exactly where the downfalls were, both the gen ed students and the special ed students, and see exactly where those areas are and increase that rigor or make sure we're teaching it thoroughly the first time and the students are getting it the first time.

Another administrator addressed effective communication as an effective practice in the role of the general education co-teacher when he stated,

> I think the general education co-teacher's role has to be one to yield some, understand that this special education co-teacher has some expertise, and the special education co-teacher has a method to her ways. So the general education co-teacher has got to value the special education co-teacher's approach to things and trust her judgment on the students that she's managing on her caseload.

Administrators were then asked to list their perceptions of the special education co-teachers' roles and how the special education co-teachers' roles impacted effective and not effective practices for co-planning. The responses showed both effective practices and not effective practices for co-planning. The effective practices fell in the categories of norms for implementation of processes and routines for shared responsibilities. In the area of implementation of processes, one administrator shared,

> I think the special education co-teacher's role needs to advocate more. Her role needs to be to remind the general education co-teacher of the goals they're working towards. The general ed co-teacher has SOL performance and pacing, and grade level content on her mind as her main directive. Whereas the special ed co-teacher has goals that aren't

necessarily aligned with SOL or even grade level content. So that's the challenge. The special education co-teacher needs to be the one that has those individualized goals at the forefront of the co-planning.

Another administrator addressed the area of shared responsibilities regarding special education co-teachers when she stated,

I think it's the special education co-teacher's role to come in with the ideas of how to change what needs to be done or adapt what needs to be done, modify what needs to be done to meet the needs of her students. She needs to know what her kids need. The special education co-teacher needs to be able to predict how a student is gonna react to something if it's behavioral. Or, I need to do for a child with a visual impairment to be able to be part of this gen ed lesson. So it's the special education co-teacher's role to come in with those modifications, accommodations, and ideas for how she is gonna present this for these kids.

The responses regarding not effective practices for co-planning and the special education co-teachers resulted in norms for lack of instructional strategies and routines for lack of effective communication. In the area of lack of instructional strategies, one administrator shared,

It's not effective when the special education co-teachers don't know the content, don't know the general education content, especially in the upper grades, and they don't know what's expected for a kid to know or how to adapt or modify everything that the student needs. So sometimes it's not effective because they're just not as well versed in the content and they've not been trained in the content curriculum. Then they can't come up with

a way to modify instruction to get those kids those key facts.

Another administrator expressed a lack of effective communication when she stated,

> As far as the co-planning, I think that when you're not planning with a teacher then it makes a difference. If that special education co-teacher walks in there and doesn't know what's going on, then we're not gonna have effective instruction in there.

The general education co-teachers from the five schools responded to question four about their perceptions of roles of the administrator, general education co-teacher, and special education co-teacher at the respective schools and each individual's impact on effective and not effective practices for co-planning. Responses for effective practices regarding administrators fell in the categories of values with an emphasis on high expectations and routines with emphasis on effective communication. In the area of high expectations, one general education co-teacher stated,

> Well, I guess she is the schedule maker. I understand she has lots of pieces to put together. But I think her role would be, as much as possible, creating a schedule where if we're going to be co-planning then trying to afford some time during the day.

Another general education co-teacher addressed the area of effective communication. She said,

> I think the administrator's role would be to sit in on team meetings with us. I know that she has a really busy role throughout the day. But I think the administrator should be aware of how we teach and be able to walk in, and notice the same things that we're looking for and be able to give us feedback. I think she should watch and participate in the co-planning.

There were not effective practices for co-planning listed from the general education co-teachers in regard to the administrators which fell in the categories of values with emphasis on lack of resources and routines with emphasis on lack of effective communication. Regarding the lack of resources, one general education co-teacher said,

> I think our administrator is supportive of the work that we do. I think their hands are tied a lot financially, with the finances of being able to provide the support that I think inclusion really does need to be able to work. I feel support but yet, where your hands are tied, it kind of negates some of that regarding resources as far as personnel.

Another general education co-teacher addressed the lack of effective communication with,

> A not effective practice would be if the administrator did not ensure that the co-teaching bond was there between the teachers and they weren't co-planning together . Or making sure that if the co-teachers weren't able to plan together for some reason, making sure that they at least know what's going on with each other's kids. I feel like that's really important.

When general education co-teachers were asked to list their perceptions of their own roles and how those roles impacted effective and not effective practices for co-planning, the responses were both effective and not effectives for co-planning. The effective practices showed as norms with an emphasis on instructional strategies and values with emphasis on the nature of the relationships. In the area of instructional strategies, one general education co-teacher shared,

> As the general education co-teacher, it's my responsibility to know the material, what is supposed to be taught in a general education classroom, what the expectations would be and what a lesson plan would look like for

> a regular education student, someone who's not struggling and to know how to execute a lesson that would involve that. I think it's also important that you have those resources too. Like I have tons of stuff to pull from and bring to the table to show the special education co-teacher. Also, bringing the pieces that are county driven that aren't necessarily special education related, like those 21st Century skills, the computer skills, integrating all those extra things they want us to do, the rigor. I think some of that stuff is harder for the special education children to get. I also feel like a lot of times I will say, how can we make this easier, how can we make this harder, so trying to figure out how to differentiate. I know that's mainly a special education co-teacher's role to talk about how to do that type of thing, but I do feel like that's important for me to be able to do.

A general education co-teacher gave a detailed description of the nature of the relationships that triangulated the administrator, general education co-teacher, and special education co-teacher. She stated,

> I think my role as the general education co-teacher is to plan lessons with the special education co-teacher and to have an outline of what I want to do. But when we are co-planning have just an outline, then get as much feedback as possible and accept it. And not put up a wall and think that what you're doing is what you're doing and the special education co-teacher is there to just help. You have to accept new ideas and be prepared.

The responses regarding not effective practices for co-planning and the general education co-teachers were values which emphasized lack of high expectations and routines which emphasized lack of effective communication. In the area of lack of high expectations, a general education co-teacher shared,

> If you just took over the whole co-planning session yourself and didn't ask anybody else's opinion on it then that would be not effective. It's easy to say, well this is what I'm doing and plan it yourself especially with the time constraints. It's easier to say I'll plan this on my own and send it to you later. But that's not really helpful when you're working with someone else.

A general education co-teacher spoke about lack of effective communication and the availability of time to meet with her co-teacher. She stated,

> I think sometimes I get stuck in just trying to get done what I need to do. And sometimes because the special education co-teacher is pulled in so many directions, and the fact that our rooms are further apart this year, it's just kind of hard to run up to a room and ask her on certain things. So just in getting by, sometimes I just have to go with what I have and fill her in as she comes in to teach. So, I think time is a big issue for me. I would love to be able to co-plan more with the special education co-teacher. For me, I think it's more of the time issue. But, because of someone like the special education co-teacher, we make it work.

The general education co-teachers were asked to list their perceptions of the special education co-teachers' roles and tell how the roles impacted effective and not effective practices

for co-planning. The responses evidenced both effective and not effective practices for co-planning. Effective practices were from the categories of norms with emphasis on instructional strategies and routines with emphasis on shared responsibilities. The instructional strategies were explained by a general education co-teacher who said,

> I like for the special education co-teacher to come prepared with ideas about how to help her kids specifically. Some of the lessons we do will go over her kids' heads and I want to know what we can do specifically to help some of those kids. I'm not as familiar with some of the problems and some of the disabilities and what's gonna reach those students the best. So, that's something that I expect when she's talking with me.

Another general education co-teacher discussed shared responsibilities. She said,

> I like for the special education co-teacher to help me split up some of the work. If we're gonna make something or create a game or create something, I appreciate when she offers to help. I think sometimes the regular education co-teacher just ends up taking on all that, OK I'll do all this and I'll make all the stuff but it's nice to have someone to help you because she is really supposed to be a co-teacher with you. So the special education co-teacher should be taking on some of the responsibility.

The responses regarding not effective practices for co-planning and the special education co-teachers resulted in norms which emphasized lack of instructional strategies and routines which emphasized lack of effective communication. The lack of instructional strategies shared by one general education co-teacher were, "If the special education co-teacher doesn't provide me with alternatives, then I think it definitely is a negative impact on our effective practices, you know,

meeting the special education students' needs." Another general education co-teacher shared the lack of effective communication when she said,

> A not effective practice would be if the special education co-teacher didn't come in here and say let's talk about our kids. This is the IEP, this is what it says, this is what we need to do. This is what I am specifically working on. If she didn't tell me, then how am I gonna know. That's a whole lot of paperwork that I'm not as familiar with.

The special education co-teachers from the five schools responded to question four about their perceptions of roles of the administrator, general education co-teacher, and special education co-teacher at the respective schools and each individual's impact on effective and not effective practices for co-planning. Responses for effective practices regarding administrators fell in the categories of values with an emphasis on high expectations and routines with emphasis on shared responsibilities. In the area of high expectations, one special education co-teacher stated,

> My administrator is forever telling us to make time to meet. She knows we can't plan like the teams plan, but she's always stressing that we need to meet because that's how we can be successful in the classroom. So in her weekly blurbs or when she's checking in, she's saying have ya'll made time to meet. She'll come in and ask how's it going co-teaching wise. She pops in on us periodically in the classroom just to check up on us. But she's always telling us, we have to make time for co-planning, whether it's during resource or lunch. We tell her that we do it through email and through text.

Another special education co-teacher addressed the area of shared responsibilities. She said, "I think our administrator sets a tone, a guideline, as far as how she expects things to be. I also think the county has set that." There were not effective practices for co-planning listed from the special education co-teachers in regard to the administrators which fell in the categories of norms with emphasis on not implementing processes appropriately and values with emphasis on lack of high expectations. Regarding the not implementing processes appropriately, one special education co-teacher said,

> Just saying we'll have a collaborative Reading class and a collaborative Math class, for example, for third grade with 11 students in there, that doesn't really make a collaborative co-teaching best practices model. So, the suggestion to split that into two was, 'oh no we can't do that.' I made that suggestion at the end of the year last year and throughout the summer when we were doing planning. The final say comes from administration of where and how many of those classes you have. And the unfortunate part of that is then, due to personnel staffing issues, I have two IEPs that I rewrote to fit the schedule put forth. Because to meet the needs of the students, the way the IEPs were written, it doesn't fit into a schedule, with the staffing allotments that we are given.

Another special education co-teacher addressed lack of high expectations. She said,

> My perception of the administrator's opinion of co-planning, as long as you're both in there doing the thing, doing whatever you say you're supposed to do, then that's all that matters. I won't say they don't care but in a sense they don't care. As long as you come to work and you do

> what you're supposed to do and your kids are progressing, how you got there to them doesn't really matter.

The special education co-teachers were asked to list perceptions of the general education co-teachers' roles and how those roles impacted effective and not effective practices for co-planning. Responses were both effective and not effective for co-planning. The effective practices showed as norms with an emphasis on implementation of processes and values with emphasis on high expectations. In the area of implementation of processes, one special education co-teacher shared,

> I think the general education co-teacher's role is to know and understand the SOLs that need to be taught, and kind of knowing the pacing of where we need to go. Then by knowing those it would provide effective co-planning because we would be able to work through that pacing guide, through the expectation, and lay out what we need to do.

A special education teacher shared high expectations about the general education co-teacher's role. She stated,

> To me the general education co-teacher's job is to be in charge of planning or pacing, whatever is on the pacing guide. That's her job. She has materials either that she's created this year brand new that we've talked about from last year that we wanted to change or use from last year. She brings those to the table and is pretty confident in her idea of how she wants the day to be laid out. It's gonna be, I want to do this this day, this this day, this this day. I can certainly add to it or take away but she's the one that's providing that structure of the work that's gonna be done.

The responses for not effective practices for co-planning and the general education co-teacher were values which emphasized lack of flexibility and routines which emphasized lack of effective communication. In the area of lack of flexibility, a special education co-teacher shared, "When the general education co-teachers are not flexible and they're seeking that element of control, that's kind of hard."

A special education co-teacher spoke about lack of effective communication when meeting with her co-teacher. She stated,

> I guess if we walked into a co-planning session and the general education co-teacher said, I don't know what we're gonna do next week. She came with nothing for us to feed off of. We typically both try to come with ideas, but if the general education co-teacher came with nothing and we had no idea where we were going or we have a whole unit to plan in Science and there's nothing to go off of, that would make it very difficult to proceed with co-planning. So that would be a not effective practice.

The special education co-teachers were asked to list their perceptions of their roles and tell how their roles impacted effective and not effective practices for co-planning. The responses evidenced both effective and not effective practices for co-planning. Effective practices were from the categories of norms with emphasis on implementation of processes and values with emphasis on nature of relationships. The implementation of processes were explained by a special education co-teacher who said,

> I feel like my role is to come in to co-planning also understanding where we're going because I do feel that's important that I understand what the pace is and where we're going with things. Also to have ideas and to be

> able to offer suggestions, and then also being able to take what the general education co-teacher would like to do and modify it in a way that would be effective for my students so that they can feel successful, that they can feel like they can be part of the class and not stand out amongst their peers. Not just my kids but even kids that are also struggling within the classroom.

Another special education co-teacher discussed nature of relationships. She said,

> My job is to modify and accommodate my kids on top of whatever the general education co-teacher wants to do, if they need it. Sometimes my kids don't need it, and you think oh they'll be fine, they need to learn how to do this. But if it's a matter of crossing out lines or whiting out lines so my kids with occupational therapy needs have bigger spaces, then to me that's my job when we get to co-planning. She gives me the stuff. I make the modifications that may or may not need to be made. I may have some stuff from what my kids have done in the past that we can use, but she's mostly bringing the materials and I'm fixing them for my friends to be successful.

The responses regarding not effective practices for co-planning and the special education co-teachers resulted in routines which emphasized lack of effective communication and lack of shared responsibilities. The lack of effective communication shared by one special education co-teacher included, "I'll suggest what I want to do for my lesson, and normally that's OK. But because it's her class, I'll sometimes hold my thoughts back, if that makes sense. I don't want to

overstep my boundaries." Another special education co-teacher shared the lack of shared responsibilities when she said,

> So not effective practices would just be coming in and pretty much giving the general education co-teacher all of the responsibility to do everything on her own. That wouldn't be fair to her. It wouldn't make for an effective co-planning session. It wouldn't be supportive for my children.

Administrators, general education co-teachers, and special education co-teachers involved in this study willing gave their perceptions of individuals' roles and how they thought the roles impacted effective and not effective practices for co-planning. Their focus was on roles of the staff and effective and not effective practices for co-planning. Implementation of processes, instructional strategies, provision of resources, high expectations, nature of relationships, effective communication, and shared responsibilities were considered effective practices. Not implementing processes appropriately, lack of instructional strategies, lack of resources, lack of high expectations, lack of flexibility, lack of effective communication, and lack of shared responsibilities were considered not effective practices. Both the effective and not effective practices listed here were norms, values, and routines that reverberated throughout the responses. Figure 10 provides a graphic representation of the effective and not effective practices for co-planning, which are included in the norms, values, and routines described by the administrators and co-teachers throughout the interview process.

Throughout responses to this question, the researcher heard the administrator's role as one of setting the tone and expectations for the co-planning process. The co-teachers varied in their roles. As the content specialist, the general education co-teacher needed to understand pacing and the Standards of Learning. As the strategies specialist, the special education co-

teacher needed to approach co-planning with a plethora of ideas for adaptations and modifications for students with disabilities to be successful within the general education content. Each key player had effective practices that supported co-planning sessions. These effective practices were compiled by the researcher, when listening to the respondents and consisted of the administrator brainstorming with co-teachers and providing resources. The co-teachers' effective practices consisted of using data to guide lessons, knowing the material, and splitting up the work. Not effective practices for co-planning outweighed the effective practices. Administrators were not going to co-planning meetings, were not able to provide ample personnel, and were not providing enough time for the co-teachers to communicate and co-plan. The co-teachers also felt that not enough time to co-plan or not co-planning at all were not effective practices. Additional issues existed. Two examples were one co-teacher not feeling comfortable sharing her thoughts and another was giving all the responsibility for the co-planning session to one person. With good co-planning being the basis for good co-implementation, it is imperative that administrators support and co-teachers implement this process in order for students to benefit from the co-teaching process.

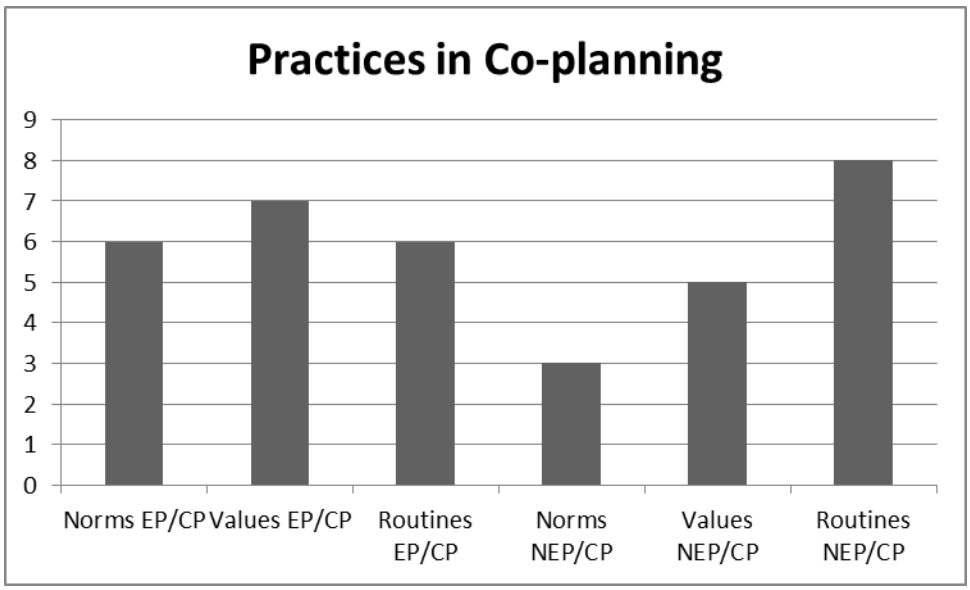

Figure 10: *Practices of Co-planning*

Question Five. Question five consisted of, "What is your perception of the (a) administrator's, (b) general education co-teacher's, or (c) special education co-teacher's role and its impact on effective and not effective practices for co-implementation?"

Administrators from the five schools shared their perceptions of the roles about the administrator, general education co-teacher, and special education co-teacher at the respective schools and each individual's impact on effective and not effective practices for co-implementation. Responses in regard to administrators for effective practices fell in the categories of norms with an emphasis on implementation of processes and routines with emphasis on shared responsibilities. There were no not effective practices for co-implementation listed from and about the administrators. In the area of implementation of processes, one administrator stated,

> I think the observation side of the administrator can really affect co-implementation. The other thing is just what do we want to see. If we want to see Math, then Math content and delivery need to be the same.

> We're confusing kids when the general education co-teacher does it one way and the special education co-teacher does it the other way. So, get on the same page and do it all in the same room. Just being directive sometimes and making them come in to review the data and saying, hey, you were an aide during that class. You're more valuable than that.

A second administrator spoke on shared responsibilities. He shared,

> I think, as the administrator, the biggest thing I can do is provide objective feedback on what the co-implementation looks like. So, that's walk-throughs and that's formal observations. I like doing formal observations where I'm really doing two observations. I'm giving feedback to the special ed co-teacher and the general ed co-teacher. It's interesting, one of our standard observations is looking at like an independent practice time, which of the adults work with which student, where the adults touch kids. It's amazing because invariably the general education co-teacher will see this data set and she'll say, I had no idea I gravitated towards this side of the room. And the special education co-teacher will say, I had no idea I checked in with this student twice as many times as these others.

Administrators were asked to list their perceptions of the general education co-teachers' roles and how the general education co-teachers' roles impacted effective and not effective practices for co-implementation. The responses involved effective practices and not effective practices. Effective practices regarding general education co-teachers fell in the categories of

norms for implementation of processes. In the area of implementation of processes, one administrator stated,

> The special education co-teacher is working with the general education co-teacher, and this comes into perception of the gen ed co-teacher's role and implementation of being able to step back, being able to allow somebody else to come into your room and do a lesson. And to have that trust factor of she's not gonna kill it, she's not gonna ruin the environment. The special education co-teacher will not get to the content as well, but she's gonna get to what the kids need to make sense of it all and to understand it all. So, it is effective when that general education co-teacher can step back and can say, all right, you go ahead, and it's that sort of loss of control. I have some very controlling teachers in gen ed because they ultimately feel like, and this is a good thing, that they want to help every single child in their room. They want to be the one to impact that child's progress. So an expectation of the general education co-teacher is, you gotta step back, you gotta give up some of that control.

The not effective practices revealed values with emphasis on lack of nature of relationships, and routines with emphasis on lack of shared responsibilities. In the area of lack of relationships, an administrator responded with, "If the general education co-teacher chooses not to share and pushes the special ed co-teacher to the side, then it's not effective."

Another administrator demonstrated lack of shared responsibilities when he stated,

> So, where the special ed co-teacher doesn't feel like it's their room, the general ed co-teacher needs to go out of their way to present their room as

> their room. The our instead of my room. I think a lot of teachers, a lot of collab general ed co-teachers feel like they don't own those special ed student's performance. They may say, "You know, 100% of my kids that are non-special ed are on grade level." I think that's the biggest hurdling block.

Administrators were then asked to list their perceptions of the special education co-teachers' roles and how the special education co-teachers' roles impacted effective and not effective practices for co-implementation. The responses showed both effective practices and not effective practices for co-implementation. The effective practices fell in the categories of values with emphasis on high expectations and routines with emphasis on effective communication. In the area of high expectations, one administrator shared,

> The special education co-teachers have got to realize the big picture that the general ed co-teacher has to deal with. The special education co-teacher needs to realize that this general education co-teacher's structure and routines are part of her fabric of who she is as a teacher. That's part of what makes the general education co-teacher an effective teacher.

Another administrator addressed the area of effective communication regarding special education co-teachers when she stated,

> The special education co-teacher sees the kids just aren't getting a lesson or they're not on task. So the special education co-teacher needs to step out of that comfort zone and be able to say, hey I don't think that worked for my kids because this is what I saw. And you just gotta keep the focus

> on the kids. Great lesson, you know blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. It didn't work for my kids because this is what I saw. And when you keep that conversation on the kids, whether you're gen ed or you're special ed, you know, there's not that, you didn't do X, Y, Z.

The responses regarding not effective practices for co-implementation and the special education co-teachers resulted in routines with an emphasis on lack of effective communication. In the area of lack of effective communication, one administrator shared, "It's not effective if the special education co-teacher just sits back and she is sitting there going, this is not working, this is not working, this is not working, but she is not doing anything to change it."

The general education co-teachers from the five schools responded to question five about their perceptions of roles of the administrator, general education co-teacher, and special education co-teacher at the respective schools and each individual's impact on effective and not effective practices for co-implementation. Responses for effective practices regarding administrators fell in the categories of norms with an emphasis on implementation of processes, values with an emphasis on nature of relationships, and routines with emphasis on effective communication. In the area of implementation of processes, one general education co-teacher stated,

> I think it's the administrator's decision to place special ed teachers and aides where they belong. I think the administrator should be able to observe, because she might have a better eye to see, OK these two teachers are gonna work well together, or they have the same values, they have the same ideas. I know when she comes and observes me and she sees the special education co-teacher that we might be a total different pair

together than separate.

Another general education co-teacher addressed the area of nature of relationships. She said,

> The administrator definitely helps with resources. He really tries to get anything at all possible if we ask for it. I know last year we wanted to use some video cameras and cameras in the classroom, and we had happened to come upon this target gift money and he was able to get, I mean for the whole school, it was I think five or six cameras that were able to be used. When we say, I really need help with something, for example, my schedule was worrying me and I went to him and I said I don't know if we have the time that I would like for Math. I'm just really concerned what it's gonna look like at the end of the year. I'm really very concerned. He talked it out with me and said, you know what, you guys go talk. If you want to bump, you know this 30 minutes here down to this afternoon spot, how you described it to me, that's OK with me.

A general education co-teacher shared effective communication as an effective practice when she stated,

> I would say an administrator's role is checking in during the day for the co-implementation. You know, are they doing, making sure they are working together during co-implementation. So I think the administrator's role for co-implementation is to make sure that they are keeping track that we are doing what we said we were gonna do or what we need to be doing in order, from the co-planning stage to make sure it goes to co-implementation.

Another general education co-teacher shared effective communication as an effective practice when she voiced,

> One of the things that's great about the administrator is that she's always in our room popping through. She does lots of walk-throughs of classrooms, pretty much every day to see what's going on. It's nice too because sometimes she'll give feedback about what's going on, oh that's a great idea, or oh have you ever tried doing this. And she offers a lot of suggestions and obviously I take her advice very highly since she's been here before and she was a special education teacher. So I think it's helpful that she offers that type of advice and that she's not seen hiding in her office all day. She's out and trying to see what's going on. She'll come around and talk to the kids and see if they really know what's going on. So I think that makes us on our toes a lot too because we know that at any time she could come through for an observation. You don't know when she's coming by. You want to make sure all the kids are on task. So I think it helps us to be better teachers because we're always prepared for that.

There were not effective practices for co-implementation listed from the general education co-teachers in regard to the administrators which fell in the categories of routines with emphasis on lack of effective communication. Regarding the lack of effective communication, one general education co-teacher said,

> A not effective practice would be if the administrator never came in the classroom, never checked in. We might be doing what we're supposed to

be doing but would it be an effective lesson, would we necessarily be doing what we were supposed to be doing.

When general education co-teachers were asked to list their perceptions of their own roles and how those roles impacted effective and not effective practices for co-implementation, the responses were both effective and not effective for co-implementation. The effective practices showed as norms with an emphasis on implementation of processes, values with emphasis on the high expectations, and routines with emphasis on effective communication. In the area of implementation of processes, one general education co-teacher shared,

> I think I have to look at, first of all, obviously what the state says that the students are required to know. So I have to make sure that I cover those SOLs. That's going to be my first priority along with assisting in whatever nuances my special education children have. Like the social issues or not completing work in a timely manner, whatever those issues are and then the special education co-teacher supports me.

A general education teacher shared high expectations regarding being familiar with her students. She stated, "My role is being familiar with the students and their needs and what they need to learn. I think it's important to know the students' personalities because it's easier to reach those students if you know them well."

Another general education co-teacher highlighted use of effective communication. She shared, "Just my being aware of what all the students are doing in the room at any time. Making sure everybody is on task and getting their work done and knows how to do the assignment and giving good directions."

The responses regarding not effective practices for co-implementation and the general education co-teacher were norms which emphasized not implementing processes correctly and routines which emphasized lack of shared responsibilities. In the area of not implementing processes correctly, a general education co-teacher shared,

> I guess not effective would be if I let my kids down. If I gave them a test and they all failed it. What in the world was I doing in my co-implementation that they got nothing out of it? Where did I go wrong? So, sometimes we don't know what we did that was not effective and we kind of have to go back to that lesson and take a second look at it and say, you know, that lesson was not effective. I need to go back and do it a little bit different next time.

A special education co-teacher spoke about lack of shared responsibilities. She stated,

> I don't know the administrator's role other than she observes what we do. There's not a lot of visibility from the administrator within the classroom. From my point of view with the walk-throughs, I don't see her. So, I don't know that a lot is seen to understand how we're co-implementing our lessons. So, there's not a lot of guidance later on.

The general education co-teachers were asked to list their perceptions of the special education co-teachers' roles and tell how the roles impacted effective and not effective practices for co-implementation. The responses evidenced both effective and not effective practices for co-implementation. Effective practices were from the categories of norms with emphasis on instructional strategies and routines with emphasis on shared responsibilities. The instructional strategies were explained by a general education co-teacher who said,

> I think to be effective, the special education co-teacher really should focus on those special education students that are struggling. So coming up with ways for these students to be successful, whether it's giving them some sort of behavior chart, knowing when they need a break, or that sort of thing.

Two general education co-teachers discussed shared responsibilities. The first one said,

> The special education co-teacher's role is making sure the students are aware and listening as well. Making sure that they're doing what the general education co-teacher is doing, knowing what's going on that day and reading through the lesson plans before she comes.

The second general education co-teacher said about shared responsibilities,

> So I feel like the special education co-teacher's job and my job are pretty similar. The special education co-teacher's role is to help bring energy where maybe I can't. Which is what's worked out really well because she loves Reading and I'm more of the Math and, so put us together and it works out. I think also for effective co-implementation, also could go for me too. I didn't think about it before, but we co-teach so much it's almost like I'm not necessarily the gen ed teacher and she's not necessarily the special ed teacher. I think for both of us the co-implementation is to make sure the ones that need that extra help are getting it. And I think I didn't really think about it because, you know a lot of the time I'm up at the front of the room on the board and she may be walking around and touching base with her kids and making sure they're on track or helping

them figure something out, kind of getting down on their level. We both do it, but I think about it more on her end, because they're "her kids" if you will. But they're my kids too. So we both do it but I think a lot of the times, I'm the one at the board. So she's normally the one that's kind of walking around touching base with everybody and, and peering in. If I'm standing on that side of board, I'll stay with table one and she'll do the rest of the room. Or sometimes we're both all over the room. It's not necessarily one or the other. It kind of depends on the lesson.

The responses regarding not effective practices for co-implementation and the special education co-teachers resulted in routines which emphasized lack of effective communication. The lack of effective communication shared by one general education co-teacher was,

I think not effective would be if she pulled her kids and was doing something and I didn't know what was going on. I think that would be not as effective just because they might come ask me later about it, and I would have no idea what they were doing.

The special education co-teachers from the five schools responded to question five about their perceptions of roles of the administrator, general education co-teacher, and special education co-teacher at the respective schools and each individual's impact on effective and not effective practices for co-implementation. Responses for effective practices regarding administrators fell in the categories of norms with an emphasis on implementation of processes, values with an emphasis on provision of resources, and routines with emphasis on effective communication. In the area of implementation of processes, one special education co-teacher stated,

> We have had professional development but just for us. You know, the special ed co-teachers and their co-teachers. And I think the special ed co-teachers didn't need it as much as the regular ed co-teachers needed it. So, it's more for their benefit. But we all sit together, so the expectations are the same. And then the administrators are part of that too, understanding this is the way we want it all to be.

Another special education co-teacher addressed the area of provision of resources. She said,

> When it comes to providing resources on how to effectively instruct or something like that, I would say the administrators send us to one of the Title One areas or the reading coach or the math coach in training. The administrators will definitely let us go wherever we want to observe another school, another class. The administrators are very good about letting us do that.

The area of effective communication was acknowledged by a special education co-teacher with,

> I think at all the schools I've been at, the administrators do walk-throughs. The administrators see what we're doing and they make suggestions or they tell us we're doing a good job. I think for them to see us having small groups, and one teacher in the front and one teacher in the back, or both of us teaching at the same time, and just making suggestions about that. I think that is really what they do.

There were not effective practices for co-implementation listed from the special education co-teachers in regard to the administrators which fell in the categories of norms with emphasis on not implementing processes appropriately and values with emphasis on lack of nature of

relationships, and routines with emphasis on lack of effective communication. Regarding the not implementing processes appropriately, one special education co-teacher said,

> I think the role that the administrators have of us co-implementing, I think is honestly very broad or almost kind of gray or murky waters. I think it comes down to having a lot of professional leeway. And as long as we're both in there and we're doing what we are supposed to do, there's really no big issue.

Another special education co-teacher addressed lack of nature of relationships. She said,

> I'll say probably some behavior issues where I think, 'oh, that student should be sent home.' But you can't always send a kid home. You've got to work with them, try to defuse the situation, and allow them to come back into the classroom. Because with sending them home, we really aren't getting anywhere. Now a fight, I think you should get sent home and suspended. That's just my own personal opinion because we have rules. But I don't know what the administrator's guidelines are. Those are just my only thoughts. So maybe to the point where some kids should get suspended because of the behavior. If you signed that code of conduct you got to abide by that code of conduct. So, I don't know how the administrators are supposed to handle things like that. That's just my opinion and I think it is a not effective practice.

Lack of communication was addressed by a special education co-teacher when she said,

> I think the administrator needs to be supportive of the fact that both of us are teachers and both of us are responsible for the instruction, not just the

general education co-teacher, that the special education co-teacher is responsible for content instruction also. I think the administrator needs to be involved and actually know what goes on in the classroom, not just saying that's the co-teaching classroom or that's the collaborative classroom. I don't see where a lot of that comes into play. I don't see them coming into the room to actually see what has been done and how it's done. Observations in the past year were never done as a co-teaching observation. They were done separately.

The special education co-teachers were asked to list perceptions of the general education co-teachers' roles and how those roles impacted effective and not effective practices for co-implementation. Responses were both effective and not effective for co-implementation. The effective practices showed as routines with emphasis on shared responsibilities. In the area of shared responsibilities, one special education co-teacher said,

Usually on day one, the general education co-teacher does her thing. It's the general education co-teacher show. I step back and manhandle the chaos that happens. Just people loosing stuff transitioning and stuff like that. And she puts on the lesson. Then we work together like you saw.

Another special education co-teacher voiced her thoughts on the area of shared responsibilities. She stated,

I think generally, the general education co-teacher tends to implement the lesson. She tends to lead the lesson. However, it's not always the case. I think typically it becomes her role to start the lesson, although I do that as well. So to be honest, for me, in the co-implementing of it, the general ed

> and the special ed co-teachers kind of go together because we are a team and we do work together. It doesn't matter really who teaches the lesson because we both teach it, and we both are there to support the kids and do whatever we need to do. So, I really feel like co-implementing of it, it's really both of us working together. I think the students see that too. The students never know who may jump up and start talking and teaching.

The responses for not effective practices for co-implementation and the general education co-teacher were values which emphasized lack of nature of relationships. In the area of lack of nature of relationships, a special education co-teacher shared,

> It can be a not effective practice if the general education co-teachers are not really willing to change their teaching style or be open to having a special education co-teacher. A lot of teachers have this is my room very type A personality, and sometimes it's hard to let go a little bit and let somebody else be part of your classroom, and do those things like co-teaching. And some teachers are much more flexible than others. And so, the general education co-teachers need to be flexible and let us come in and do those things too. But sometimes it's hard to let go a little bit.

The special education co-teachers were asked to list their perceptions of their roles and tell how their roles impacted effective and not effective practices for co-implementation. The responses evidenced both effective and not effective practices for co-implementation. Effective practices were from the categories of norms with emphasis on implementation of processes and routines with emphasis on shared responsibilities. The area of implementation of processes was explained by a special education co-teacher who said,

> I think working with the teachers, being flexible, trying to have a very peaceful classroom is good. I think it's my job to work with that general education co-teacher to try different things, to try to help the kids become better readers and, better at math and of course doing all our SOL stuff that we have to do for the end of the year. So, work with that team. I have to be a team player. It's not the way it used to be where you just pull them out and you do your own thing. We no longer do that anymore.

Another special education co-teacher commented on the implementation of processes. She stated,

> I need to be able to know the material. It is my responsibility to know what the plans are. It is my responsibility to be able at any moment, to interject and give a new direction on how to do a problem or a situation.

A special education co-teacher commented on shared responsibilities when she offered,

> I think, as a special ed co-teacher, if we're co-teaching and we're talking and she says one thing and I say something, that's awesome, that's effective. But, if I'm teaching and she's assisting or she's teaching and I'm assisting, we have to truly be assisting, giving those kids that extra help, or that extra guidance. Even if it means we're whispering and we're saying the same problem at a much slower pace and pointing out their errors, you actually have to do it.

The responses regarding not effective practices for co-implementation and the special education co-teachers resulted in norms which emphasized not implementing processes appropriately, values which emphasized lack of high expectations, and routines which emphasized lack of

shared responsibilities. The area of not implementing processes appropriately was shared by a special education co-teacher. She stated,

> I think a not effective practice for the special education teacher would be not saying or doing anything. But if you don't assist, you just sit there, and you're just sitting by a kid and you're not helping, that's really not effective either. Then that's like one assist, one not help. Like when you fake you're assisting and not doing anything. No one's gaining from that.

Another special education co-teacher shared the lack of high expectations when she said,

> Too many times the special education co-teachers just show up, walk around the room, don't interact with any of the students, and don't participate in any of the instruction. I don't believe that comes across as respect even for the special education co-teacher from the general education co-teacher. It's my job to know what's there. So, if I don't come in prepared, then that's gonna give a bad note. There are teachers who don't come in prepared, that's not to say that I always do, because well, I try to know what's going on in class at all times.

Two special education co-teachers talked about lack of shared responsibilities. The first co-teacher stated,

> I think not co-planning with your general education co-teacher and not doing the things you promised. Like if we o-plan and I'm supposed to copy things and I'm supposed to bring books in, and I'm supposed to do this stuff, I have to have all those things together and bring them. I need to be prepared and do the things that I'm supposed to do too. That makes

> the gen ed co-teacher really mad if I don't have all my things, because then you're certainly not effective.

The second special education co-teacher who talked about lack of shared responsibilities offered,

> I think it would be not effective if I just chose to work with my special education kids. And if I left everything to her, you teach it, I'm just here, I'm just gonna sit beside my special education student and make sure that he's on task, then it's not a team effort anymore. There are days that I may sit and pull my group because a group is struggling, that's part of our plan. So, I think it would be not effective if I left it all to her to do and I did my thing.

Administrators, general education co-teachers, and special education co-teachers involved in this study gave their perceptions of individuals' roles and how they thought the roles impacted effective and not effective practices for co-implementation without reservation. Their focus was on roles of the staff and effective and not effective practices for co-implementation. Implementation of processes, instructional strategies, provision of resources, high expectations, nature of relationships, effective communication, and shared responsibilities were considered effective practices. Not implementing processes appropriately, lack of high expectations, lack of nature of relationships, lack of effective communication, and lack of shared responsibilities were considered not effective practices. Both the effective and not effective practices listed here were norms, values, and routines that reverberated throughout the responses. Figure 11 provides a graphic representation of the effective and not effective practices for co-implementation, which are included in the norms, values, and routines described by the administrators and co-teachers throughout the interview process.

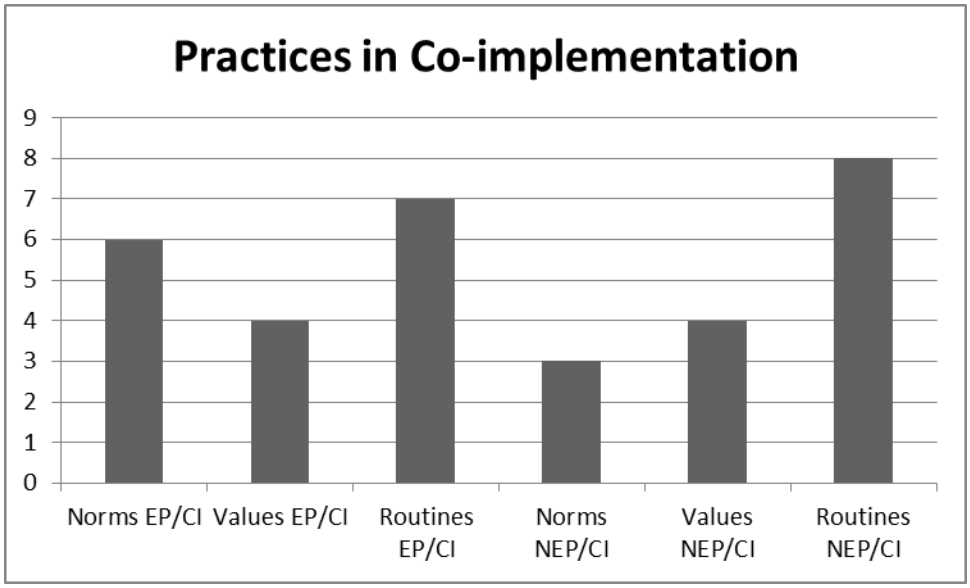

Figure 11: *Practices of Co-implementation*

The researcher heard from all participants in the study that the administrator's role in co-implementation was to do observations, provide feedback, and help with resources. The general education co-teacher's role included knowing the state standards, leading instruction, and co-planning with the special education co-teacher. The special education co-teacher's role was to be flexible and co-plan with the general education co-teacher. Each key player had effective practices that supported co-implementation sessions. The researcher viewed these effective practices as consisting of the administrators doing walk-throughs followed by suggestions and providing training opportunities in the area of co-teaching for the staff. The general education co-teachers' effective practices consisted of being familiar with and owning all students and sharing co-implementation within the general education classroom. The special education co-teachers' effective practices consisted of bringing additional energy into the classroom, knowing the content material, focusing on the needs of the students with disabilities, and sharing co-implementation within the general education classroom.

Not effective practices for co-implementation were reported as administrators not giving feedback and not observing co-implementation. The general education co-teachers were not effective when they were not willing to change their teaching styles in an attempt to maintain control and not sharing with the special education co-teacher. The special education co-teachers were not effective when they did not offer suggestions, did not follow through on responsibilities, and left it all up to the general education co-teacher to conduct the lessons. In order to have good co-implementation and success for all students within the general education classroom, it is imperative that administrators support and co-teachers implement this process with fidelity.

Figure 12 provides a graphic representation of the effective and not effective practices for co-planning and co-implementation, which are included in the norms, values, and routines described by the administrators and co-teachers throughout the interview process.

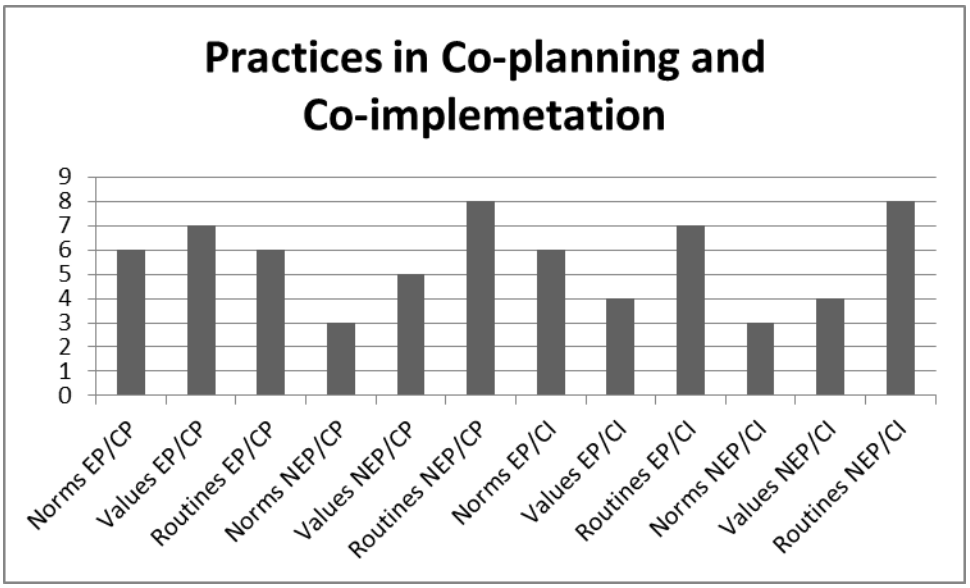

Figure 12: *Practices of Co-planning and Co-implementation*

Question Six. Questions six consisted of, "How do you as the (administrator, general

education co-teacher, special education co-teacher) perceive the impact of the school's culture on the practice of first co-planning and second co-implementation and why?"

Administrators from the five schools shared their perceptions on the impact of their individual school's culture and on co-planning and co-implementation. They also shared why they felt this way. In addition, some of the administrators embedded classroom culture into their responses. Responses in regard to co-planning fell in the categories of norms with emphasis on implementation of processes and values with emphasis on high expectations. In the area of implementation of processes, one administrator stated,

> I feel like the culture here at our school is one of acceptance of everybody, and inclusion of everybody, and being warm and friendly of everybody. So, I feel like when the co-teachers go to co-plan that they are going in there with an open mind and a warm heart. Because they're in there to provide lessons, or co-plan for lessons, that are for their children.

In regard to high expectations, am administrator shared,

> I believe that the teachers are all willing to participate in co-teaching. Some probably have some reservation of it, because there are always gonna be some who are a little leery of, oh goodness, what do we do with this student? But if we provide enough support they are able to co-plan and co-implement together. I know some of that has to come with baby steps. We do a little bit at a time.

Another administrator spoke in regard to high expectations when she said,

> You have a culture and environment that teachers are co-planning

> together whether they're general ed or special ed or support services. It's like we always say, we're all in this together, we can't do it alone. So having a culture that is willing to work together and willing to have tough conversations is just so important. If this were a culture where everybody did their own thing and nobody communicated or talked, it would not at all be effective for the better good.

Responses in regard to co-implementation fell in the categories of values with emphasis on nature of relationships and high expectations and routines with emphasis on effective communication. In the area of nature of relationships, one administrator stated,

> We're building our culture in terms of those cross grade level conversations. What does the first grade team need to say to the kindergarten team and what do they want the second grade teachers to know? We are building that and those are tough conversations to have. As the administrator, I'm not looking for cross grade level conversations, if I'm not expecting them. If I haven't set those expectations, then shame on me, because it's not gonna happen. And so setting a culture that, for all teachers, general ed, special ed, whatever, that they're co-implementing good quality practices and good instruction. Then you know that comes from the school culture.

In the area of high expectations, an administrator offered,

> This year, it's really been a new instructional focus. My big thing is fidelity to schedule. Because if you don't adhere to the schedule, you lose time you don't even realize you're losing. But it does make me feel

> good that the co-teachers are cognizant that, you know what, my Reading time ran over today. I think they're more likely the next day to say, you know what, I'm gonna make sure I am Reading on time and start my Math on time. And so, those subtle ways I'm seeing that cultural shift that hasn't been there before.

Effective communication was acknowledged when an administrator shared,

> I think it's the same with the culture of the co-implementation. The co-teachers are taking into consideration the diversity of our students and their different levels of understanding and their different ways of understanding. And I really think that they are taking that into consideration as far as the differentiation and how the students learn. I think their perception of these students is that the students are really their children from 7:50 to 2:40, they're theirs.

General education co-teachers from the five schools shared their perceptions on the impact of their individual school's culture and on co-planning and co-implementation. They also shared why they felt this way. In addition, some of the general education co-teachers embedded classroom culture into their responses. Responses in regard to co-planning fell in the categories of norms with emphasis on implementation of processes, values with emphasis on nature of relationships, and routines with emphasis on shared responsibilities. In the area of implementation of processes, one general education co-teacher stated,

> I think just the openness of our school and almost friendships that we have with the people that we are working with are very helpful. Because the special education co-teacher and I get along, it makes it easier for us

> to co-plan together and to co-teach together. I think just the school culture in general of working together and just that openness to one another helps us when we're co-planning and when we're co-teaching.

A general education co-teacher talked about the nature of relationships when she said,

> I think we do have such a community of winners. We want to get these kids where they need to go and we're in it, we're in it to win it! We're in it for these kids. I think this is a really great environment to be able to co-teach in because everybody's trying to help everybody else. Not even just co-teachers, you know, we'll be back and forth between just the third grade teacher rooms. Like hey, what are you doing for this, or what do you think about this? So, I think the environment here is so inclusive in general for our grade level that it's natural to co-plan with a special education co-teacher who is going to be in your room with you at the same time.

For shared responsibilities, a general education co-teacher shared,

> Well the impact of the school's culture is that, it's critical that we co-plan because we have so much to consider when we are co-planning. You know, how we can bring in those pieces that allow us to now only talk about the curriculum, but what I want to call the enhancements to help build up what they don't know already.

The responses from the general education co-teachers in regard to co-implementation fell in the category of routines with emphasis on effective communication and shared responsibilities. In the area of effective communication, one general education co-teacher stated,

> It does help to have the school culture promote that co-planning time so that we can get the co-implementation a little bit more flawless, seamless, you know, just natural. Instead of being there on the spot and not knowing, we've had days where we couldn't co-plan as well and you're piecing it together. The co-implementation just didn't flow at all. It just feels segmented, pieced together and it's just not natural. So, you just feel like you're going through the motions more than you're living the teaching of it.

Another general education co-teacher spoke of shared responsibilities with,

> So, with support from the school culture, co-teaching really runs, not always perfectly, but it flows. You can tell when the students are calm and when they're not, especially with rotations when it could be a zoo, but they actually do quite well with it. And that helps when the two co-teachers both know what everyone is supposed to be doing, even if we're not necessarily working with everyone. We know where the students are supposed to be, and they know that this is what is expected of them in here. I think that helps with the co-implementation part of co-teaching.

The special education co-teachers from the five schools shared their perceptions on the impact of their individual school's culture and on co-planning and co-implementation. They also shared why they felt this way. In addition, some of the special education co-teachers embedded classroom culture into their responses. Responses in regard to co-planning fell in the categories of norms with emphasis on implementation of processes and values with emphasis on high

expectations. In the area of implementation of processes, one special education co-teacher stated,

> I think, unfortunately a huge part of our school culture is dealing with the insurmountable hold poverty has on a lot of these kids. Because of that, you have to plan around it, you have to teach around it. You have to co-plan for their lack of background knowledge. We have to co-plan for the fact that they're not coming to the table with help at home. So, we can't send X, Y, and Z home for homework to reinforce, because there is no one at home for them to work through it with them to ask questions, to get that deeper knowledge base. The parents are out working or just don't have that ability to help them. I believe our community as a whole has affected the school culture because they don't value that education piece. So, when you're co-teaching and co-planning, you're trying to make something that's so unimportant to them, important. And that's a hard job. They have to buy in. I want them to buy into education, because that is what's gonna get them out of where they are right now.

Another special education co-teacher addressed implementation of processes with,

> I think because of the culture of our school and knowing the diversity that we have, it's important to be sure that you co-plan so that you're able to meet those needs of the diversity within our school. Understanding what's going on in our school and who each kid is and what they bring to the table is important. If we didn't co-plan, we wouldn't be able to bring all those differences in to play and understand that. So, I think that's

why the co-planning is very important.

High expectations were shared by a special education co-teacher when she offered,

> Our school culture, as a whole, definitely affects the school practices. But how the general education co-teacher and I co-teach, how we talk to them, how we motivate them or discipline them is all counter acting that school culture. Because at the end of the day, it doesn't matter where you live, that's what we tell the students all the time. Your street address doesn't matter. The brand of clothes you wear doesn't matter. What matters is what you got on that test, because that's the score that counts. That brand name doesn't matter. That score counts and just seeing the students buy into that, and they're buying in. They have to in order to be successful at the school. We have to get the students to buy in to education and not play these, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 and 'reward dollars,' just buy into education. Get the students to see what's beyond the four walls of the classroom or even beyond this community because most of them haven't ever been beyond this community.

The responses from the special education co-teachers in regard to co-implementation fell in the category of norms with emphasis on implementation of processes. In the area of implementation of processes, one special education co-teacher stated,

> When you co-implement the lesson, I think it's important to think about the whole school and try to bring in pieces of different things that are happening around the school. Talk about different cultures and somehow tie that into your lesson. So just really understanding who the students

> are and bringing that into your co-planning. Then as you co-implement your lesson, being able to tie those pieces together for the students so it makes sense to them. They're then making real life connections and being able to understand it in that way.

Another special education co-teacher shared implementation of processes with,

> I see the way the administration interacts with the students with disabilities. I see the way the other teachers react and interact with these special education students and it's always the same as they would with any other child. I don't see differences in our culture at this school. And I think we're teaching the kids to be the same way too, because they see us do it during co-implementation. So then the students are gonna learn and they're gonna do the same thing. So hopefully, when the students are adults, they're not gonna make fun of somebody who comes to the store and talks about the weather because it is the most interesting thing to him, because he's Autistic.

Administrators, general education co-teachers, and special education co-teachers involved in this study willingly gave their perceptions of the impact of their individual school's culture on co-planning and co-implementation and explained their perspectives. Their focus was on school culture and both co-planning and co-implementation. Implementation of processes, high expectations, nature of relationships, and shared responsibilities were addressed in co-planning. Implementation of processes, high expectations, the nature of relationships, effective communication, and shared responsibilities were addressed in co-implementation. Areas of co-planning and co-implementation involved norms, values, and routines which were evident in the

participants' responses. Figure 13 provides a graphic representation of the norms, values, and routines described by the administrators and co-teachers throughout the interview process in explanation of the five schools' cultures and their impact on co-planning and co-implementation.

The researcher gathered from the interview responses that the individuals in these three roles were knowledgeable about their school cultures and were able to expand on how their school cultures impacted the co-planning and co-implementation processes. The participants acknowledged important elements that created a positive school culture. These elements consisted of acceptance of everybody, working together, communicating within and across levels, and relationships. Co-planning was considered critical in order for the co-teachers to support all students and provide differentiation for their diverse group of learners. Co-planning provided opportunities for co-implementation to flow smoothly while including all students. Co-implementation provided role models for students as they observed their co-teachers working together and then being able to replicate this with other students and add to the positive school culture. It was through this interview process, and in particular this question, that the researcher observed the school culture linking to the processes of co-teaching and supporting inclusion of students with disabilities.

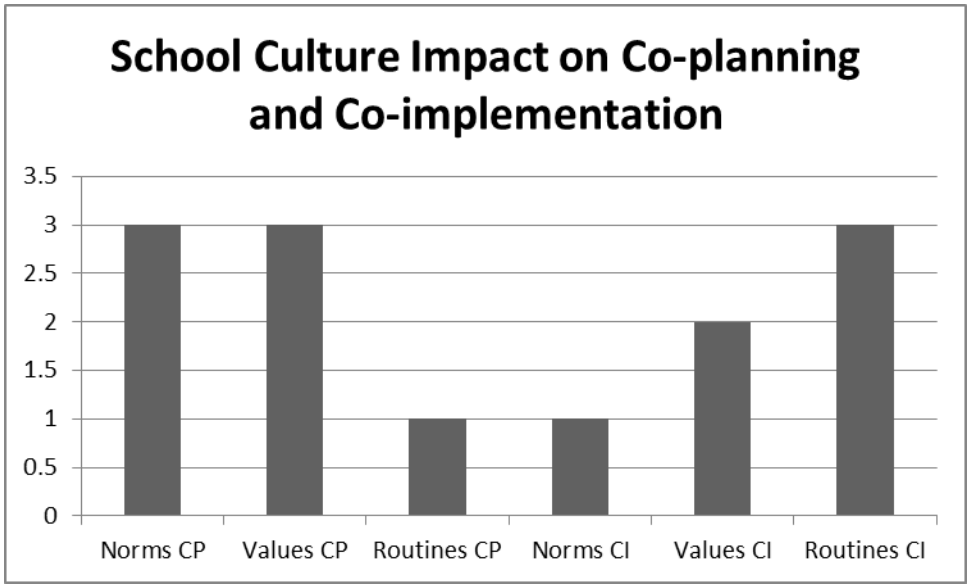

Figure 13: *School Culture Impact on Co-planning and Co-implementation*

Themes. Interviews with the administrators, general education co-teachers, and special education co-teachers at the elementary level were conducted, coded, and analyzed to derive themes. Based on the interview results documented in the six questions above and the need for blending some themes into a single theme, the final themes emerged. These themes included rapport among staff, procedures and practices, positive attitudes and high expectations, school culture that valued inclusion, and resources. The resulting themes and details of the interviews will be used in conjunction with the observation results to provide answers to the research questions.

Relationships and Overarching Themes

A comparison of the themes from the observations and interviews brought forth similarities and differences. Table 11 shows the comparison of the observation and interview themes.

Table 11

Comparison of Themes from Observations and Interviews

Observation Themes	Interview Themes
Relationships and Communication	Rapport Among Staff
Implementation of Processes and Instructional Practices and Practices	Procedures and Practices
High Expectations	Positive Attitude and High Expectations
Shared Responsibilities and Flexibility	School Culture that Valued Inclusion
Safe Environment	-
-	Resources

Composite of Norms Values and Routines

A comparison of the total number of norms, values, routines gathered from the study was analyzed. In addition, a comparison of norms, values, and routines per school was analyzed. The results of this analysis can be found in Table 12.

Table 12

Comparison of Norms, Values, and Routines

Schools	Norms/Percentage	Values/Percentage	Routines/Percentage	Total/Percentage
School 1	68/30.9%	83/37.7%	69/31.4%	220/25.2%
School 2	33/20.5%	51/31.7%	77/47.8%	161/18.5%
School 3	43/25.9%	70/42.2%	53/31.9%	166/19.0%
School 4	39/24.1%	48/29.6%	75/46.3%	162/18.6%
School 5	41/25.2%	61/37.4%	61/37.4%	163/18.7%
Total	224/25.7%	313/35.9%	335/38.4%	872/100%

Responses to Research Questions

Question One

"How does the staff at the elementary school level perceive the school's culture and the culture's impact on practices of inclusion for students with disabilities?"

Staff members at five elementary schools participated in this study. The researcher viewed the data gathered from the participants through a constructivist paradigm in an attempt to develop an understanding of the unseen human meaning-making forces which build on one another and help one to understand each school community and its impact on inclusion of students with disabilities (Lincoln, 2005, in Paul). The inclusion piece focused on students with high incidence disabilities in co-teaching environments in general education classrooms. It was apparent in the literature that in order to have successful inclusive co-teaching environments, support was needed at the district, school and classroom levels (Walsh, 2012).

District and School Culture. These five schools perceived their school cultures and the impact that the culture had on practices of inclusion for students with disabilities in a variety of ways. Overall, culture of the school district impacted the path the schools took in regard to inclusion. The direction from top administrative level personnel was a move toward full inclusion. This was heard in the responses from the school staff. One example was by a co-teacher who stated,

> I think that inclusion comes from the top down. I think that our administration and I think the administration above that want everyone to be included in a regular setting if they can, least restrictive environment, to have them in the regular classroom. It's presented to us from there and it trickles down to the next level and to the next level.

With a focus on norms, values, and routines, participants were observed in their natural environments and then interviewed about their school cultures. The administrators felt strongly that inclusion of all students was necessary to promote creation of a positive school culture. Their responses included norms and values.

Norms. One administrator shared a norm for her school. She stated,

> I think this school is really a case study in family, and we're all different in families. So, we're very accepting of different races, different abilities, and we're all here to help each other out. I really do sincerely mean that. I think that if there were ever a school that, from the guidance to the special ed, you know, we love kids. So, that's pretty much it. Always there to support one another.

Another administrator included a norm about culture and practices in her school. She shared,

> So the culture is that we promote good citizenship with everyone and we take a pledge in the morning that we will act our best and try our best. That means whether it's educationally in the academic setting, or whether it's self-discipline and the behavioral. We expect people to do that. Children with disabilities are not perceived any differently here when it comes to the culture or practices. It's just, this is the way the expectation is and the students and staff know that.

Values. The values were also inclusive but had some thoughts on variation in delivery of services based on the needs of the students. An administrator reported,

> I perceive our school's culture as a positive one. One that is all inclusive of all students, not just students with disabilities. The teachers

> understand that I believe that we're responsible for all children. For everyone has a shared responsibility to teach everyone for success, regardless of their status, either disability or otherwise.

While another administrator spoke openly about the needs of her students when she offered,

> My philosophy is to have the students included as much as possible. Because it's not fair to say included all the time because that's not what's best for a lot of our children, but included as much as they can. That's just our, if they can do it, they may not be necessarily getting as much academically but what they're getting socially is just as important as what they're getting academically.

School Culture's Impact on Inclusion. The co-teachers included norms, values, and routines to express their perceptions of the impact of school culture on inclusion for students with disabilities. These individuals also included classroom cultures in their responses.

Norms. A co-teacher shared a norm for her school when she said,

> I think that our principal and our leadership here expect inclusion, it is part of what we do. I think I'm lucky in the fact that I have a principal who was a special ed teacher. I think because our administration and our school in general are very supportive, that filters down to the classroom, the regular co-teacher that I work with.

Values. A value was expressed by a co-teacher which included thoughts on variation in delivery of services based on the needs of the students. The co-teacher also included an emphasis on how she wanted the children to feel equal, valued, and important. She shared,

> I think while having the special education students here in our classroom

and the model that our school has to include them, treats them just like any of the other children. Taking the special education students from where they are, having them experiencing the same, and having the same kinds of instruction that all of the general education kids receive. They're in the general education classroom. The special education students also have some special deficits that we want to bring up to par and they have opportunities to have those needs met in a separate situation. We then bring them back into the general education classroom where we can all be doing the same thing. So, I feel like we work really hard to make these children and all of our children feel equal, valued, and important and be able to receive what they need from all of us. We work cooperatively in that role.

Routines. With emphasis on routines, a co-teacher meshed the school and classroom cultures. The co-teacher also included parents in the fold when she discussed supports needed for students on the path to success. She stated,

Two teachers in the classroom, I think it's great. You're double dipping. When I was a kid and I went to elementary school, we always had two teachers in the classroom. So, to be back to where they're two teachers in the classroom, it gives the kids a better chance at success, especially the ones that are struggling. It's kind of hard to make it to all 20 kids, even though we try. But as a special education co-teacher, I'm in there with her and we can double dip. We double check kids. The kids get the best of both worlds. You got two teachers in your classroom; two

> teachers are trying to help you to succeed; two teachers that have your back; two teachers that are checking up on you, and no one person is carrying that load. When you meet with the parents, two of us are meeting with them and explaining to them the success of their child, or your child needs more help, or your child is struggling. We're both in there trying to work with the students and help the students to succeed, to gain the knowledge that they need. And I just consider it a strength that two teachers are in the classroom.

Summary. The study participants, at these five schools, were positive when talking about their school cultures. All participants felt that inclusion of students with disabilities was important to the students, schools, and their individual communities. The cultures varied somewhat due to the socioeconomic status of the individual schools. However, the staff at each school cared for all students and felt that meeting the needs of all students, inclusive of the students with disabilities, was a major focus. The use of the co-teaching model was used in each school as a service delivery for some students with high incidence disabilities in meeting the needs of these individual students, but the co-teaching model was not used one hundred percent of the time as proposed by the school district. The entire staff was cognizant of addressing the needs of the students with disabilities and continued to do so by developing the Individualized Education Programs (IEP) to meet these students' needs. The culture of each of the schools was positive and supportive with inclusion as a priority for students with disabilities. All staff wanted what was best for the students, and they were willing to spend the time and effort to support all their students on the students' road to success.

The researcher supports ideas from the administrators and co-teachers about the need for good citizenship, expecting inclusion of students with disabilities, being responsible for all students, and thinking of the school as a family. Together the entire staff in the district can make full inclusion a viable option if all participants are supportive of the concept and one another. The result is a positive school culture which supports all students and provides a microcosm of an inclusive world which has the potential to change ideas about including people with disabilities in the future.

Question Two and Two/A

"How does the staff at the elementary school level perceive the impact that the school's culture has on the co-planning part of co-teaching? (a) Why are some practices used by general education and special education teachers in co-planning perceived as effective or not effective?"

According to the literature, the co-planning component promoted successful co-teaching and helped to create and sustain successful inclusion programs (Mastropieri et al., 2005). This component also provided the opportunity for co-teachers to spend time together and change their mindsets. In turn, these co-teachers became lateral thinkers who took the best parts of current knowledge of how things were done and created new and different ideas (Smith, 2002). The responses from the participants about their perceptions of the school culture had embedded information about the classroom culture and its impact on co-planning. This information was seen during both the observations and the interviews. Three areas emerged that described the school and classroom cultures which included the school and classroom cultures' impact on co-planning. The three areas were acceptance of students, expectations, and relationships.

Acceptance of Students. In the area of acceptance of students, there were values and routines.

Values. One co-teacher stated a value when she offered,

> I think a lot of the students' perceptions of themselves carry over when they go to other places. So, I really try to make sure that we promote acceptance in the classroom and what our weaknesses and our strengths are as individuals, no matter who we are.

Routines. A routine was expressed by an administrator when she stated, "I think the school culture that I have tried to develop at this school is that we are accepting, they are ours, and we need to do the best we can to educate these children."

Expectations. In the area of expectations, there were norms, values, and routines.

Norms. A norm was stated by a co-teacher who shared, "I think co-planning is just expected. This is what we do. All of us do it. We all co-plan with our co-teachers. Everybody does it. It's what's expected and so it's what we do."

Values. Multiple responses were given in the area of values. A positive value was stated by an administrator who said,

> I think the administrator sets the tone for the whole building, whether it is special ed or general ed, whether it's office staff, whomever. Again that divide, you know, where if you make it sound like there's special needs and there's general, we're all human beings and we're all probably special needs.

Another administrator stated the level of expectation in his building. He shared, "I think the level of expectation for performance and growth is pervasive throughout this school. The teachers want the students to be successful."

A co-teacher also shared a value with,

> As far as the administrator goes, I feel her impact on co-planning is an expectation that we're planning. Here at this school we don't turn in lesson plans. So, as far as her role in the co-planning, I would just say that she expects us to co-plan together. That she would assume that we are co-planning together.

Another co-teacher felt that co-planning was not a top priority. She stated,

> I wouldn't say that co-planning isn't valued, but I wouldn't say it's a top priority. I think it's an expectation that you do co-planning and you find time to do it. I think there's a lot of expectation of what my job is and however you figure out the number of hours that you need to do it, you do it. And there's not time within the school day for us to co-plan.

A co-teacher stated a value with a negative tone when she stated,

> I think that trusting to do the right thing idea can almost be a downfall. You're giving people a lot of power to not necessarily follow through on their co-planning. I would say that the administrators are not actively involved in co-planning.

Routines. A response in the routine category was heard from a co-teacher who shared, "I feel like the administrators should know and make sure that we are meeting, make sure that we are co-planning together. The co-planning is so vital to what happens in this classroom." A response from a co-teacher resulted in a positive routine. She offered,

> I think the administrator makes sure that we are doing our co-planning. I would say that she is interested in what we're doing. She wants to know that we're effectively co-teaching and co-planning. She did meet with us

> at the beginning of the year and just touched base on how everything was going. She is interested in whether we are co-planning together and if it is effective.

An administrator expressed a positive routine when she stated, "So, I think when the co-teachers go in to co-plan, they are taking the approach that they are in there to co-plan for children and they're treating their students as if they're their own children."

Relationships. In the area of relationships, there were values.

Values. Values were stated by administrators. One administrator shared,

> I think that in co-planning and in partnering people, a general ed teacher and special ed teacher, you need to consider the personalities of the particular people. Some people are laid back. Some people are much more structured. The two co-teachers can drive each other nuts if it's not done correctly.

The second administrator stated, "So I think as far as the initial first step for co-teaching, it is the relationship. Building that relationship, having the resources, and finding the time to co-plan."

Effective and Not Effective Practices for Co-planning (EP/NEP: CP). Effective practices were seen during the co-planning observations. Oftentimes, the researcher left with numerous questions about the process. These questions were cleared up during the co-implementation session and then were expanded during the interviews. In the interviews and observations, there were multiple responses from the study participants regarding practices that were either effective or not effective for co-planning. In their interview responses, the participants often stated why they felt that these co-planning practices were either effective or not effective. Three areas emerged which included communication, roles and responsibilities,

and resources (i.e., technology, materials, personnel, time to plan). The area of communication included norms, values, and routines.

Communication (EP/NEP: CP).

Norms. In the area of norms for communication, a co-teacher felt an effective practice was,

> I think looking at the curriculum that the gen ed teacher provides and having my input as far as how we can modify it and accommodate it. Just giving some different ideas, things that might cover different learning styles. For one student, it's enlarging print and it's looking at things and finding ways so that she doesn't have outbursts because she's upset about this or upset about that. Or helping the other kids be accepting of those kids with disabilities. And then also trying to bring up their Reading and their Math and help them to, I mean, they have learning disabilities, so it's difficult for them, but trying to bring their Reading and their Math levels up to the level of the other students. So, I feel like that's my role. And we do that all in our co-planning, talking about it, trying to figure out what the best way is.

Another norm that a co-teacher felt was an effective practice included,

> I think what makes us work is that we know exactly what we are doing together because we co-planned it. I also think the ownership, it's not my lesson, it's not her lesson, it's our lesson. I feel like if I planned this and this is what you're doing, it just isn't right. I want her to have ownership too and give me ideas and feedback.

It was an administrator that stated an effective practice about how he felt the special education co-teacher should share in co-planning sessions. He expressed this view with,

> I think the special education co-teacher needs to do a better job of advocating for what she wants and not just going with whatever the general education co-teacher has planned and trying to modify the work, because she's got things to offer too.

Values. In the area of values for communication, a co-teacher felt an effective practice was,

> I'm supposed to know what her kids' disabilities are so that I can plan appropriately. I think that she needs to be able to help me understand what those disabilities are. Because if you're a special education teacher you went to school specifically for special ed. So, you know way more about the disabilities, the paperwork that is involved when it comes to those kids. So being able to come in and tell me what they're going to be like.

A value for communication that is a not effective practice stated by a co-teacher was,

> If I don't like the format of a worksheet or I don't think the students with disabilities are necessarily ready to attempt a test, that's a problem in co-planning. Because, the general education co-teacher has in her mindset what she needs to get done and what she wants to get done in this day and in this week and she states, this is what we're gonna use. And if I don't really like it, she's not always receptive to me going, well I'm just going to completely change it, or I'm going to do something

equally different.

Routines. In the area of routines for communication, a co-teacher felt an effective practice included,

> What the special education co-teacher and I always do at the beginning of the year is go through the IEPs together. We'll sit in here before the kids come to school and we'll run through them and we'll look at their goals for the year. We kind of take note of all the goals together. So her role was to help me decipher what are the students' goals, and what I can do in here that's gonna help the special education co-teacher with them. So, she gave me like a list of just little things that I could do, like on the way to lunch. So, I think that's really effective that she was able to come in and tell me just little things to help with her goals in any way that I can. You know, anything that helps, even if it's just 30 seconds to do something.

Another effective practice for communication in the routine category came from a co-teacher who stated,

> If the plans are gonna change, letting me know they're gonna change. I understand schedules change. I'm flexible. But as long as I know it, I'm good to go. And the general education co-teacher is very good about that. She'll email me maybe the night before and say, hey I really think we need to review this before we can move on so this is my plan. Could you be prepared? We're gonna pull this group and talk about this. She's very effective with communication and letting me know and that's a big

piece of it. As long as there's communication, then it can all flow.

In the area of routines for communication, a co-teacher expressed a not effective practice which included,

> For not effective, I just think I don't speak up enough because in the situation where the general education co-teacher demands quietness, we just got to deal. You know, the students are not gonna be quiet. And I'll just let her say, ya'll have got to be quiet and I'm sitting there like (expression), and I'll go like this (expression). We're not gonna get that and I'm saying it to myself but maybe I just need to voice it to her and say, you know what, I know you need absolute quiet, or you want absolute quiet so the kids can focus. But when the students are working on seat work, and if they're sitting near each other, they're gonna whisper talk. If they're on the computer, maybe they shouldn't be whispering, because they're listening to a story and they need to stay focused. But you're gonna get to a point where you can't have complete quietness. You can't! And maybe I just need to sit down and talk to her.

Roles and Responsibilities (EP/NEP: CP). In the area of roles and responsibilities, there were norms, values, and routines.

Norms. In the area of norms for roles and responsibilities, an administrator felt an effective practice was,

> The special education co-teacher's role is to break the curriculum down to the level that the special ed co-teacher can deliver it to students with disabilities. So that the same information is presented but maybe in a

different way for the special ed child on their instructional level.

The co-teacher felt that a norm in the area of roles and responsibilities included an effective practice when she said,

> When we're going through the plans and what's gonna go on, I need to make sure that those plans, are understandable by my kids, and are implementable. My role is to make sure that whatever we're doing in the classroom is possible, whether or not we need to modify it or co-implement it, or change implementation strategies. That's my role in the co-planning portion of it.

Another co-teacher felt a not effective practice that was a norm included the fact that there is no down time for the special education co-teacher during the school day. She stated,

> You have multiple grade levels as a special education teacher. It can be an issue if you're not organized. I have to be organized on my side, because the general education co-teacher only has one grade level, but as special ed, I have several grade levels. So organization plays a key. I've got to know that hey, I'm doing third grade right now, I've got to have all third grade material. I've got to be ready to go. There is no down time when you're a special education teacher. There's no down time!

Values. In the area of values for roles and responsibilities, an administrator felt an effective practice was,

> There's gotta be a lack of ego involved when you co-teach. I mean, you're sharing your space. If you don't provide a space for that special ed teacher to work or you're territorial over your stuff it's not gonna

work. So make sure there's a space.

A co-teacher felt that a value for roles and responsibilities included,

> Making sure that I come in the co-planning session with the right frame of mind of ready to do whatever I need just to support both the co-teacher and students. Because, my role is really to support the general education co-teacher and to support the kids and bring it all together.

Another co-teacher felt that a not effective practice for roles and responsibilities was when the special education co-teacher always agreed with the general education co-teacher or the work was modified to be too easy. She stated,

> Anything you say, the special education co-teacher is not effective when she says OK, because there's always ways to make things better. Also, sometimes it's hard because the special education co-teacher wants to make things too easy sometimes. And I know sometimes the special education co-teachers are more about making sure the special education students understand everything first before doing the work .

Routines. In the area of routines for roles and responsibilities, an administrator felt an effective practice was, "I feel the general education co-teacher and the special education co-teacher should co-plan and they should both take an equal role, accept responsibility for 100% of the students. This is not yours or mine, they're ours." Another administrator felt that an effective practice in the routine category included, "The co-teachers would have to sit down and talk about who's gonna do the data collection and define the roles. Then determine what it's gonna look like when the co-teachers present the lesson."

Co-teachers chose to talk about not effective practices in the area of roles and responsibilities. One co-teacher offered,

> I think expectations had been set up in the past for us to grade and copy. And I can't grade half of five different classes. So I think that was always hard for me to try to help the teachers but also they needed to understand that they only see that small piece of what I do. So, I don't think they understood all the other things that I had to do. So sometimes, I think that can be a difficult thing between a co-teacher and a special ed co-teacher. Or they'd want to plan and they'd want to plan for like two hours and I'd be like, but I gotta plan with four other people. And so that was a challenge.

Resources (EP/NEP: CP). In the area of resources, there were values and routines.

Values. In the area of values for resources, only co-teachers shared effective practices. One co-teacher shared,

> As far as resources go, I think one of us will go and ask her what we need or what's not working. So, for example, if we feel like we need more support in here, an extra pair of hands, we can talk with her, and I think she should be in here watching. So, if she were to come in to a lesson and think there weren't enough resources, tangible or non-tangible, that she could know what we were looking for to see what was absent. She can just see, OK, this is what they're talking about. They need more technology aides or they need another pair of hands. Resources she can help get because she's the top person in the school that's gonna help us.

Another co-teacher stated a value in the area of resources,

> I think the administrator is where it starts in giving us the time to co-plan and to co-implement so that we can implement in the classroom what is there. The administrator is the one who governs how that schedule was put together, and needs to take into account teachers' recommendations, because we're the ones who are in it day-to-day, of how to go about setting that schedule up to allow for best practice.

Multiple co-teachers shared how co-planning would be most effective. One co-teacher stated,

> The optimal planning time would be during the day at some point. And I know it's hard to schedule that, but that would be amazing if there was a time during the day we could do it. Or if there was an early release once a month or something to have teacher planning time. The administrator has given us a lot of planning time on staff development days. She'll make our meetings briefer to make sure that we have time to meet with our grade levels, or she'll give us time in the meetings to meet with grade levels.

In the area of values for resources, not effective practices emerged from both administrators and co-teachers. One administrator shared,

> Well, to be honest with you, resources are probably the weakest, providing time, because we just don't have the time. I wish the co-teachers had a little bit more time. You know, the co-teachers plan as much as they can before and after school, but the special education teacher's schedule is very, very tight. Time is of the essence and we

can't squeeze blood out of the turnip basically.

Another administrator felt that a not effective practice in the area of values included,

> First of all, it's trying to find the time to co-plan because I have one teacher who has grades kindergarten to three and a second teacher who has grades four and five. We divided it that way simply because of caseloads. But, when you've got a teacher who has to plan with three different teachers, that's one afternoon a week that she has to meet with each teacher. So time is really tough.

Co-teachers were realistic about not having time during the day to co-plan which was a not effective practice. One co-teacher stated, "It just comes down to time. We stay late because we don't have time in the day to co-plan. Without planning, I don't think co-teaching can work. But at an elementary school level, we don't have the time. "

Routines. In the area of routines for resources, both administrators and co-teachers shared effective practices. One co-teacher shared,

> I've never had just had one grade to work with before. It's really much better to have that for planning purposes. It's worked out well this year for me in that respect that I only have two teachers to plan with and they're in the same grade. So we do it at the same time!

An administrator shared an effective practice in the routine category for resources. She stated,

> I think there needs to be time, it's just taking the time to really co-plan and think out the stumbling blocks. To understand where the kids' are gonna struggle, what supports they are gonna need, and what's that gonna look like.

Routines for resources that were not effective practices far outweighed the effective practices. The majority of responses focused on time to plan and were expressed by both administrators and co-teachers. One co-teacher stated a not effective practice when she offered,

> The special education co-teacher is fabulous. She is very flexible and easy to work with. She's very detail oriented. So to have someone like this special education co-teacher is a Godsend. Because she knows her stuff and she's very comfortable with just jumping in and helping out. The co-planning, we have attempted to do once a week. The special education co-teacher has two other grade levels that she has to plan with, plus she is also grade level chair for the special ed and resources department. She's got other responsibilities too. So, she and I will kind of do things on the fly.

It was a co-teacher that shared frustration about the logistics of being able to co-plan. She stated,

> I would like to be more involved in the co-planning. But the teachers I work with understand that I also have four self-contained preps of my own where all of the students are doing slightly different things, because it is a pullout situation. We talk about what's gonna go on in the classroom for co-teaching, but it's still like at the beginning stages of the co-teaching. They plan it, and we co-implement it. I will make modifications as I see are needed.

A co-teacher talked about the process for co-planning that is required at her school and the extensive time requirements. She shared,

> I would say that as a grade level, we don't have the time to plan except

> for after school. As co-teachers, we don't have the time after school either. We have one whole meeting with the grade level with talking about all the stuff we have to do and data and this is the plan for next week, this is what we're looking to teach. Then we have to come back a whole other day and just worry about just our co-taught class. So it's a lot of time.

Administrators were vocal about not co-planning and how that would be a not effective practice for the routine area. One administrator stated, "I think that when you're not co-planning that it makes a difference. When the special education co-teacher walks in the classroom and doesn't know what's going on, there's not gonna be effective instruction."

Summary. The study participants, at these five schools, felt that each individual school's culture impacted co-planning. This was evidenced in the effective and not effective practices chosen for the process of co-planning. All participants felt that co-planning was expected to occur with emphasis on communication, roles and responsibilities, and resources. Relationships among the staff had an impact on the success of co-planning. Resources had an overall negative impact on co-planning due to lack of personnel and lack of time to co-plan. All staff members were cognizant of the need for acceptance and support for students with disabilities. The culture of each of the schools was positive and supportive with inclusion as a priority for students with disabilities. Each school was somewhat challenged in providing co-planning that would support the co-teaching model. Many of the co-teachers chose to spend time outside of the school day co-planning to support their classroom needs and the needs of their students.

The researcher is able to envision how the elementary school staff perceive the school culture's impact on co-planning. Overall, the cultures include acceptance of all students and

being responsible for and expecting students' positive performance and growth. It is the administrators' responsibility to hold co-teachers responsible for and somehow provide time for co-planning so that co-teachers can be thoughtful about any stumbling blocks and thus be able to differentiate instruction. The administrators' actions create not effective practices in co-planning when they are not cognizant of matching personalities when setting up co-teachers and requiring extensive responsibilities of the special education co-teacher outside of the co-teaching environment. It is the co-teachers' responsibility to share the classroom and all responsibilities and provide a classroom for students that models equal roles between the co-teachers. When the co-teachers are resistant to change, are not communicating, and are not working together, then the co-planning becomes a not effective practice and often results in co-planning not occurring. Appropriate co-planning can be the bridge to effective inclusive education for students with disabilities. The researcher sees the co-planning process as providing opportunities for growth for staff and the chance to provide excellent instruction for all students.

Question Three and Three/A

"How does the staff at the elementary school level perceive the impact that the school's culture has on the co-implementation part of co-teaching? (a) Why are some practices used by general education and special education teachers in co-implementation perceived as effective or not effective?"

According to Mastropieri et al. (2005), successful co-teaching was promoted by the co-implementation component. This component helped to create and sustain successful inclusion programs (Mastropieri et al., 2005). In addition, co-implementation provided the opportunity for co-teachers to spend time together and change their mindsets. These co-teachers became lateral thinkers who took the best parts of current knowledge of how things were done and created new

and different ideas (Smith, 2002). The responses from the participants about their perceptions of school culture had embedded information about the classroom culture as well as the district culture and its impact on co-implementation.

District Culture. Views on the district culture were expressed by two co-teachers. One co-teacher referenced her values on the district's concepts of relationship, relevance, and rigor when she stated,

> I just think that hopefully our values for loving children, wanting to teach children, comes through here. You've heard that this district wants relationship, relevance, and rigor. I really do think that the relationship that we're forming with these children does help. We're high fiving and it's not rehearsed, we feel it in our hearts.

Another co-teacher shared her concern about the district's professional growth system and the growth system's potential negative impact on inclusion. She shared,

> I think attaching a special education teacher to a general education classroom through the new professional growth system makes the general education teachers not want us in there even more. Because when their numbers and their pass rates include our numbers, it is detrimental to the good teachers. I think use of the professional growth system is gonna push the teachers that are bad teachers, because that score is gonna hover over them and possibly then send them to not having a job. I also think that the general education teachers who are willing to have the special education students in the classrooms, when their scores don't hold up to standard, the rating system then is gonna hurt that good teacher.

School and Classroom Cultures. The school culture and classroom cultures were noted during both the observations and the interviews. One administrator and one co-teacher commented about the school culture and the culture of collaboration. The administrator shared, "I think the impact of the school's culture positively affects their learning." The co-teacher stated, "So I think that if the school has a culture of collaboration and positivity and you know looking for the best in kids, that can't help but filter over into planning and implementation." Three areas emerged that described the school and classroom cultures which included the school and classroom cultures' impact on co-implementation. The three areas were relationships, expectations, and roles and responsibilities.

Relationships. In the area of relationships, there were norms and values.

Norms. One co-teacher stated a norm in the area of relationships when she shared, "It really depends on the people that you're working with. And if you don't have somebody that you have a lot of confidence in, that can hurt the co-teaching."

Values. A value in this same area was shared by a co-teacher with,

> I love co-teaching. I think it's fun. I think it's nice to have someone else in the classroom to have fun with! It makes the job kind of funnier when you can kind of laugh about things that happen during the day. And when something happens that's stressful, you have someone to talk about it with. I think it makes teaching a lot more fun, especially if you get along with the person that you're co-teaching with. I think it makes teaching good. And I think co-teaching's really good for the kids because they get to have two teachers to pay attention to them and to try to help teach them. When one teacher can't reach them, the other one can and I

think it's just a cool thing.

Expectations. In the area of expectations, there were norms and routines.

Norms. One co-teacher stated a norm in the area of expectations when she said, "Organization, routine, and structure. Those are our big three. Without all three of those things, the co-teaching is not gonna work."

Routines. A routine in this same area was shared by an administrator with,

> I think one of the routines is I'm gonna come around, I'm gonna be in your classroom, I'm gonna stop, I'm gonna see what the kids are doing. I'm not trying to criticize you. I'm trying to make connections with those kids. I'm trying to check on a student's progress, you know, a variety of things, but that is done every single day and don't stop teaching because I'm coming in your room. It's definitely a routine here and having been at another school as an administrator, that's not a routine everywhere. And I think that does come from the school culture as well. You know, I have respect for your time and respect for your job. I'm not here to catch you. I'm here to support you. I'm here to support the kids. I think that's important and sort of unique about our school.

Roles and Responsibilities. In the area of roles and responsibilities, there were routines.

Routines. One co-teacher stated a routine in the area of roles and responsibilities when she said,

> With co-teaching, what's the saying, 'two heads are better than one.' We just bring it together. We just work off of each other and feed off of each other. She may have something I need, I may have something she needs;

she may know something I don't know, I may know something she doesn't know. So, we just put it all together to make it work.

Effective and Not Effective Practices for Co-implementation. Effective practices were seen during the co-implementation observations. Any questions this researcher had following the observations were cleared up during the interviews. In the interviews and observations, there were multiple responses from the study participants regarding practices that were either effective or not effective for co-implementation. In their interview responses, the participants often stated why they felt that these co-implementation practices were either effective or not effective. Three areas emerged which included relationships, expectations, and roles and responsibilities.

Relationships (EP/NEP: CI). The area of relationships included norms, values, and routines.

Norms. In the area of norms for relationships, a co-teacher felt an effective practice was,

> I think the kids understand and I feel like and I hope this is true on the kids' part that they feel like I'm a teacher just like the general education co-teacher is. The students know that the teachers are not just here to hang out. Yes, I respect the teachers. Yes, the teachers help me. Yes, I listen to the teachers.

Another co-teacher felt a norm for the area of relationships that was an effective practice included,

> I think if you had just walked in off the street you wouldn't have known which was the regular education co-teacher and which was the special ed co-teacher. The special education co-teacher and I do similar things,

where we just kind of feed off one another. I have no problem with the special education co-teacher going up to the promethean board and doing whatever.

Values. In the area of values for relationships, a co-teacher felt an effective practice was feeling comfortable with each other. She stated,

> I think definitely the big part of co-teaching is making sure you have good plans, but also that you have a comfortable relationship with the other person. I think the kids can pick up pretty quickly if you're not comfortable working with the other person. I think the purpose of co-teaching is that one person says something and the other person can bounce an idea off or say it in a different way that a kid understands. So making sure that you feel comfortable with the other person jumping in on what you're saying.

Two co-teachers shared values in the area of relationships that were not effective. One co-teacher offered,

> It's very tough to change, especially if it's your personality. Sometimes I've had to just let it go and do it the way the general education co-teacher wants it to be done, even though I know that that's probably not the best way to do it. This is because the general education co-teacher is not gonna let go and we're just gonna have that butting heads all year. I don't want that to go on because it affects our classroom.

Another co-teacher shared a not effective practice in this area about feeling a part of the general education classroom. She stated,

> Because you're in there for Writing, or you were just in there for Math, or you were just in this classroom for Reading, you don't feel part of the class. You just feel like you're there for just that little piece. But, the general education co-teacher wants it to always be, oh you're part of the classroom, but you can't when you only pop in for half an hour a day for maybe writing time.

Routines. In the area of routines for relationships, a co-teacher felt an effective practice was,

> Effective practices for the general education co-teacher are again communication, flexibility, and respect. When we were doing the word building exercise, we didn't talk over each other. We let each other finish speaking, we respect each other. And that's really effective for us, because we're letting each other do our jobs. Even though we do the exact same job, we're giving each other the opportunity to do it, instead of one person trying to outshine the other. That's not where we are. So, I could say that for co-implementing a lesson in the classroom, respect is one thing that's really effective. We respect each other enough to allow us both to do our jobs. We respect each other enough to handle the kids and it's not always sped kids that we have to deal with. And I think that's great because the general education co-teacher has allowed me to come in her classroom and be her equal. So, I kind of like that.

Another co-teacher listed a routine that was an effective practice. She stated,

> Communication, I think communication is a big key in this co-teaching

umbrella. Communication is an effective key. For co-implementation, we've got to know the kids. I cannot just know my sped kids. If I'm in that classroom, I've got to know about everyone in there, because I could be sitting there and not knowing that 'oh, he's asleep,' but I don't react to it. My main purpose is for my special education students, and I understand that. But me personally, I'm in there for every student, and that's the way it has to be. I have to be able to, how can I say, be visible and get the kids to look at me as I'm another teacher. I'm not the behavior police. I'm not in there just to walk around class and to monitor you. We've had that label before and that's not a label I want to put out there as a special education co-teacher.

One co-teacher shared a routine in the area of relationships that was not effective. She stated,

> A not effective practice for the special education co-teacher would be asking more questions than the kids are because she's not listening to the directions or talking to a kid and missing the directions. Sometimes giving kids wrong directions is frustrating. If I've said something a certain way and it's for a grade and then the special education co-teacher kind of changes it or is over helping someone. I know it's easy to say this kid's really struggling, I'm just gonna write it for him or I'm gonna do this. But a lot of times, he is fully capable of doing it himself. So it depends on the assignment. This is for a grade and you shouldn't be overly helping. Or you can read it to them, but you don't need to help them write all their answers or that kind of thing.

Expectations (EP/NEP: CI). The area of expectations included norms, values, and routines.

Norms. In the area of norms for expectations, a co-teacher felt an effective practice was,

> I think an effective practice would be to co-plan then stick to the plan.
> Also remember that when you are co-teaching together, you have to feed off each other, look at each other, communicate with each other, and also be able to do that silently and nonverbally.

Another co-teacher listed a norm that she felt was an effective practice for the area of expectations. She said,

> I think sometimes you have to just look at the fact that the special ed co-teachers do know a little bit more about their students and what might be the best way to approach things, but some people don't want to hear that.

There were no not effective practices listed under norms for the area of expectations.

Values. Co-teachers listed values that were considered effective and not effective practices under the area of expectations. The effective practice was,

> I really think that that co-planning and co-implementation go hand in hand. We're so inclusive in general with the co-planning so of course it's gonna run smoothly in co-implementation because we both know exactly what's supposed to be going on.

A not effective practice in this area included,

> I think personality differences or personality conflicts, not necessarily in a bad way may be a not effective practice. If you have someone that's

> super-duper laid back and you have someone that's very anal and organized and just that creative flow being different can almost be a battle in a way when you're trying to implement anything.

Routines. Co-teachers and administrators listed routines that were considered effective and not effective practices under the area of expectations. One effective practice was,

> I think it's big to have a routine in your classroom that your kids know. I think the routine also helps with co-implementation. If the students know the routine, if they know where they need to be and when, and they're used to it, it only takes them 30 seconds as opposed to five minutes to transition.

A second effective practice for expectations under routines included, "Adjusting the schedules where needed to make sure that the co-teachers are able to have enough time to meet the needs of the kids, based on the IEP hours."

A not effective practice in this area included,

> Other not effective practices are not providing the special education teacher things that she needs in order to modify, in order for the students to be successful, and changing things, if it was talked about, then changing it and not doing that activity. Then so I walk in and I'm clueless.

Roles and Responsibilities (EP/NEP: CI). The area of roles and responsibilities included norms, values, and routines.

Norms. In the area of norms for roles and responsibilities, a co-teacher felt an effective practice was, "The co-teachers must use the data with co-implementation, when they have the

assessments. They may need to go back and reteach what the students didn't understand." Mostly not effective practices were evident in the norms for roles and responsibilities. One co-teacher shared,

> So the special education co-teacher is pulled in a lot more different directions than I am. I'm pulled in a lot of directions but not in the same way that she is. So, I think that makes it difficult for her to be as accessible sometimes. I'm not faulting her at all because she's always been there when I needed her, but sometimes she's got other issues that she's got to see to. Sometimes meetings take precedence and so the special education teacher co-teacher may not be in here to co-teach.

Another example of a not effective practice for a norm in the area of roles and responsibilities included,

> Not effective practices are where I think sometimes the special ed teachers have not been as comfortable in their role in getting up in front of the entire class, and feeling like they are looked at as the special ed teacher, kind of labeled that way.

Values. In the area of values for roles and responsibilities, an administrator felt an effective practice for co-implementation included,

> The special education co-teachers have got to realize the big picture that the general education co-teacher has to deal with. The special education co-teacher has got to realize that co-teaching is difficult for the general education co-teacher. The general education co-teacher is probably used to closing the door and having her kids and having a level of autonomy.

> So, the general education co-teacher is giving up a lot of autonomy to take on a collaborative classroom. The special education co-teacher needs to realize that this general education co-teacher's structure and routines are part of the fabric of who she is as a teacher. And if you take away a certain routine, or doing it a certain way, that's part of what makes the general education co-teacher an effective teacher. So, you can't just dismiss that, you need to value that.

Mostly not effective practices were evident in the values for roles and responsibilities. One administrator shared a not effective practice when she stated,

> One teacher might come in with a hands-on activity whereas one comes in with a whole class review activity. If the gen ed teacher has one idea and the special ed teacher has another idea and their ideas aren't matching up, you know, sometimes that you do see in the lesson and it's not effective.

Routines. In the area of routines for roles and responsibilities, an administrator felt an effective practice for co-implementation included the model chosen for co-teaching. She shared,

> When the co-teachers work together, I've seen them do different models of co-teaching based on the lesson and based on the need. I've seen them piggyback off each other. I've seen them where one is the lead co-teacher and the other one is the facilitator. I've seen where they both are just facilitating and letting the question or the lesson of the day lead itself and they're just assisting with whatever is happening at the desks and tables. So as far as co-implementing instruction, I've seen it in all different ways.

A co-teacher shared an effective practice in the area of routines under roles and responsibilities when she offered,

> For our presentations in the classroom, we both have the floor, we both jump in when we need to with the whole group. We also feel like if we're teaching and there's a few that aren't quite caught up with their work, we'll both decide if we're moving on or not. Then we can have a small group in the back, and it's not just her. I can take a group and she can lead. So I think we do a good job pacing.

An administrator shared the effective practice of defining teachers' roles. He stated,

> You know, on a whole group side, there needs to be a clear definition of roles and I think all the kids should see both teachers as teachers and authorities. Then when you break off into independent practice, it needs to be clearly defined, who's working with whom and what role they're gonna play. There isn't just, oh let me see who needs help. It's that the special ed co-teacher knows who she's gonna target, because the co-teachers have already anticipated the stumbling block, where I'm gonna work with these kids for this amount of time in this space, and the regular ed co-teacher's gonna work with these kids. It needs to be strategic about who gets what help during the practice, and the co-teachers cross over and vice versa. So, I like the idea of the two teachers and they both work within a single classroom.

Multiple not effective practices were evident in the routines for roles and responsibilities. One co-teacher shared a not effective practice when she stated,

> I'm moving forward blindly and I have to recognize and keep in the forefront of my mind that I have four special learners. I mean they're all 19 special but, you know, pardon the special. The special education students need the accommodations and they need the reminder and to lose sight of those things is not effective. I've had times where I'm overwhelmed and I lose sight of them. And believe you me, I see the result and it's usually not good.

An administrator also felt the need to state a not effective practice in the area of routines for roles and responsibilities. She shared, "I think, it's not effective honestly when the special education teachers just go in and they sit and they listen and they hear what's going on and they don't provide information on what their students need."

Summary. The study participants, at these five schools, felt that the school's culture impacted co-implementation. Along with the school culture, district and classroom cultures shared views that would impact the use of co-implementation positively and negatively. This was also evidenced in the effective and not effective practices chosen for the process of co-implementation. All participants felt that co-implementation was expected to occur with emphasis on relationships, expectations, and roles and responsibilities. All three areas had an impact on the success of co-implementation. However, there were more negative responses in the area of roles and responsibilities than the other areas. The culture of each of the schools was positive and supportive with inclusion as a priority for students with disabilities. However, each school had challenges in providing co-implementation to support the co-teaching model.

The researcher was able to visualize how the elementary school staff perceive the school culture's impact on co-implementation. Overall, the school cultures consist of collaboration and

positivity. Expectations for accountability along with visits to classrooms help the administrators to create effective practices for co-implementation. Co-teachers create effective practices in co-implementation when they provide organization, routine, and structure. When the co-teachers treat each other as equals and communicate effectively, there exists effective practices during co-implementation. The creation of not effective practices in co-implementation occur when the co-teachers are extremely limited in their time to co-teach (i.e., 35 to 60 minutes daily) and are not cooperative about how the co-implementation should proceed. The co-implementation process goes well when proceeded by an effective co-planning process. The researcher sees co-implementation as an opportunity for the teaching staff to create a unique growth experience for themselves and their students. In addition, the professionals will be able to provide excellent instruction for all students with disabilities in an inclusive environment.

Summary of Results

Fifteen study participants, at five elementary schools, were positive when talking about their varied school cultures. Classroom and district cultures were embedded within the responses about the school culture. Each study participant felt that inclusion of students with disabilities was important to the students, schools, and their individual communities. All study participants were child-focused and agreed that meeting the needs of the students was a major focus for their school. For the students with disabilities resulting in an IEP, inclusion varied according to each individual's academic and behavioral needs. All study participants willingly gave extra time and effort to support all their students and provide them with an optimal learning and safe environment. These five schools were examples of microcosms that have the potential to change ideas about inclusive environments for people with disabilities.

Study participants felt that their school cultures did have an impact on the use of co-planning in varying degrees. It was an expectation from the district and school levels that co-planning occur to support the use of co-teaching as a service delivery model for students with high incidence disabilities. Relationships, communication, expectations, roles and responsibilities, and resources had an impact on the success rate of co-planning. Each of these areas had the potential for effective and not effective practices. Because of the positive and supportive atmosphere about inclusion of students with disabilities within these five schools, all except one area had effective practices. Lack of resources (i.e., time to co-plan) impacted co-planning negatively. Thus, the schools were challenged in providing ample support in the area of co-planning for the co-taught classrooms. It was the dedicated co-teachers that gave freely of their time outside of their school day to co-plan.

These same study participants felt that their school cultures did have an impact on the use of co-implementation in varying degrees. The co-implementation segment of the co-teaching model was used as a service delivery model for students with high incidence disabilities. Relationships, expectations, and roles and responsibilities had positive effective practices and supported the success of co-implementation. It was the lack of resources, which involved special education personnel to cover the classes that provided challenges for the schools as they attempted to support the co-teaching model. Some schools had more support than others through the use of instructional assistants, but not additional special education teachers. The district expected full inclusion but without the appropriate resources, students with disabilities were not afforded the opportunity to participate in full inclusion for 100 percent of the day. It was the dedicated co-teachers who worked diligently to support one another and the students with

disabilities even though there were not enough special education personnel to support the students throughout the school day in the general education classroom.

In an attempt to decipher the data that brought about these results, norms, values, and routines were categorized in the observations and interviews. Areas were identified that described the school and classroom cultures as well as the effective and not effective practices for co-planning and co-implementation**.** Figure 14 is a graphic representation of the times that norms, values, and routines were referenced in the research questions. However, it does not reference each time an example was given for the areas norms, values, or routines, only that each category was referenced.

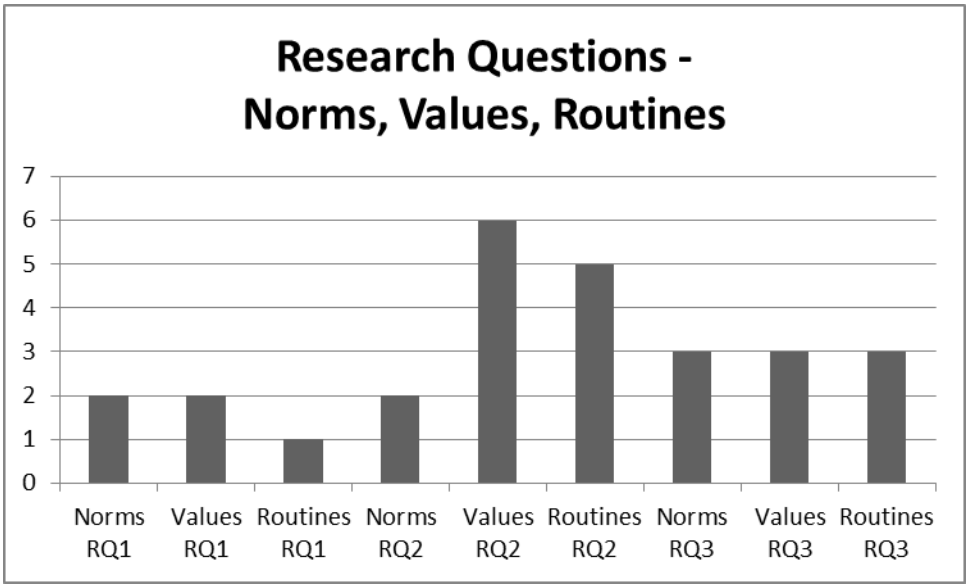

Figure 14: *Representation of Norms, Values, and Routines Found in Research Questions*

By comparing the themes from observations and interviews and providing a further in-depth look at the co-planning and co-implementation results, themes began to emerge. Table 13 demonstrates the themes from research question two and two/a involving co-planning and question three and three/a involving co-implementation. Together Table 11 and Table 13 provided the information needed and the final themes for this study became transparent. The

relationships between the four areas revealed four themes. Themes included relationships, expectations, roles and responsibilities, and resources. The descriptors for each of the themes can be found in Table 14.

Table 13

Comparison of Co-planning and Co-implementation Themes

Co-planning Part 1	Co-planning Part 2	Co-implementation Part 1	Co-implementation Part 2	Final Themes
Relationships	Communication	Relationships	Relationships	Relationships
-	-	-	-	-
Expectations	-	Expectations	Expectations	Expectations
Acceptance of Students	Roles and Responsibilities	Roles and Responsibilities	Roles and Responsibilities	Roles and Responsibilities
-	-	-	-	-
-	Resources	-	-	Resources

Table 14

Final Themes and Descriptors

Themes	Descriptions
Relationships	Communication Rapport Among Staff Respect
Expectations	Attitudes Positive/Negative Impact Process, Routines, Schedule
Roles and Responsibilities	Acceptance of Students Value Inclusion Responsible for Materials Co-teaching Models Shared Teaching
Resources	Technology Personnel Materials Time to Plan

Overall, personnel from the district, school, and classroom levels believed that students with disabilities should be included in the general education environment. These individuals were providing support during and after contract hours to create a successful inclusive environment that allowed opportunities for co-teaching as a service delivery model for students with disabilities. Unfortunately, these individuals were frustrated by the lack of resources that restricted their abilities to provide optimal services for their students with disabilities. Co-planning and co-implementation were negatively impacted by the lack of these resources.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

Discussion

The findings from this study gave insight as to how school and classroom cultures affected practices of inclusion for students with high incidence disabilities at the elementary level, how co-planning and co-implementation were influenced by the school culture, and why some co-teaching practices worked and some did not work. Because this was a multicase study within a single school district, the researcher was able to compare case studies and get a global perspective on how culture from the district, school, and classroom levels affected practices of inclusion and the phenomenon of co-teaching within its natural context.

During the study, it was apparent that relationships existed between the organization's structure and culture. According to literature, anytime there are changes in one of these areas, changes in the other area will occur. As these two coordinates co-evolve, each one shapes and is shaped by the other (Bate, Khan, & Pye, 2000). Change was inevitable and as was referenced in one school by an administrator, "We're in a transitional period in our school culture." However, the other administrators felt that their cultures were functioning appropriately and did not require significant changes at this time.

Through the use of observations and interviews with a focus on norms, values, and routines, each school's culture became apparent to the researcher. Multiple characteristics identify a positive school culture and were observed in the schools and classrooms and during

the interviews. Some of these characteristics included positive staff attitudes, teamwork, sharing of responsibilities, safe physical environment, high expectations, effective communication, and professional relationships. These same characteristics were found in the literature by Canizo (2002), Casey et al. (1995) Shachar, Gavin, and Shlomo (2010). As these study participants from each school spent time together, they were able to establish common expectations and build a collective personality for their schools and classrooms. In turn, this established a value system for all the participants which affected the effectiveness of the system as a whole. Gruenert (2009) and Siehl and Martin (1990) supported this idea in the literature. As a result, these participants acting in the role of risk takers created a balance between authority and autonomy and competition and cooperation and supported teamwork as described by Sisman (1994). Therefore, it seemed apparent that inclusion and school culture needed to converge if students with disabilities were to be accepted and become an integral part of the school environment at all levels, thus changing the school culture to have a more inclusive environment.

Also apparent, in the observations and interviews, were the relationships between the district's mission and vision, school and classroom cultures, and inclusion practices for students with high incidence disabilities with emphasis on co-planning and co-implementation in co-teaching. Culture at the district level favored full inclusion, whereas, culture of the schools and classrooms favored a combination of both inclusive and pullout service delivery models for students with high incidence disabilities. Those administrators who supported inclusion and accepted co-teaching as a service delivery model in their school environments created a learning community with a natural support system for all students to experience a sense of belonging as noted in Pugach and Johnson (2002). As the participants in this study worked together in their individual schools, they created collaborative school cultures which were considered to be the

best learning environments for students and teachers as supported in the literature by Gruener (2005) and Waldron and McLeskey (2010). Creation of these collaborative school cultures established a way in which these individual schools began to solve problems and sustain improvements, particularly in relation to the inclusion of students with high incidence disabilities.

From the time of conception about inclusion to the present, there has been a change in mindset to accept students with high incidence disabilities into general education classrooms and not just into the school buildings. This change was influenced by the staff of risk takers who won over the staff of resisters within each school (Friend & Cook, 1992). Inclusive cultures and inclusive classrooms were the result, as well as the provision of more successful academic and social learning environments for students with high incidence disabilities. This was supported in the literature by Cramer and Nevin, (2006). As these cultures and classroom environments became the norm, routine rituals began to fade and the opportunity for growth and change emerged. Thus, students with high incidence disabilities had the chance to be included and supported by all staff within the classroom, school, and district in every aspect.

Despite a change in mindset of personnel at the district level to include students with disabilities 100 percent of the time, and the fact that school level administrators and teachers were expected to comply, this was not the case within any of the five schools in the study. Each school was participating in the co-teaching model, but not 100 percent of the time. The level of inclusion varied according to the participants' beliefs in the use of the co-teaching model and whether resources were there to support this delivery option. These five schools were able to deliver proper co-teaching models, with a general education co-teacher and special education co-teacher, as service delivery options at a frequency range of 15 percent to 54 percent of the school

day. Some schools were able to then supply support from an instructional assistant for an additional part of the day which then changed the frequency rate range from 19 percent to 75 percent. However, the general education co-teachers felt that the instructional assistants were just there to help and not co-teach. So co-teaching was not occurring in the same manner as it was when the special education co-teacher was present in the general education classroom. Also, use of the instructional assistants does not hold true to the definition of co-teaching in this study.

Co-planning and co-implementation practices at the five schools were observed and addressed in the interviews. Together, these practices promoted successful co-teaching and created and sustained successful inclusion programs (Matropieri et al., 2005). The goal was for these two co-teachers to spend time together and become lateral thinkers. These participants were given the opportunity to take the best knowledge of how things were done and create new ideas and make overall improvements. As noted in the literature by Smith (2002), these creations required time, effort, and resources. Communication was the critical component to making this co-teaching, and the practices of co-planning and co-implementation, a successful option (Gallagher, 1998; Gersten, Keating, & Irvin, 1995; Mastropieri et al., 2005; Mesler Parise & Spillane, 2010; Silliman, Ford, Beasman, & Evans, 1999; Smith, 2002; Stone, 1996).

In the literature, co-planning was considered to be effective if there was time allotted for the co-teachers to co-plan with the optimal being co-planning daily and on an ongoing basis during the school day (Austin, 2001; Hang & Rabren, 2009; Magiera et al., 2006; Pugach & Wesson, 1995; Trent et al., 2003). In addition, the co-teachers could use co-planning time to set long-term and short-term goals. Unfortunately, none of the co-teaching teams in the study were afforded the opportunity to have a co-planning time during the school day and were forced to meet after school hours or by alternate means such as emailing and texting. All of the co-

teachers were willing to give of their personal time to co-plan but varied in their availability to meet. Therefore, time spent for team building, problem-solving, reflecting on student progress, varying student instruction, and creating universally designed and differentiated lessons with some of the teams was somewhat lacking. These areas were also noted in previous studies by Gerber and Popp (2000), Hang and Rabren (2009), Magiera et al. (2006), and Murawski (2012). Because of a lack of unified co-planning sessions with certain teams in the study, these individuals were seen as struggling on how to work as a single unit in the classroom. When they struggled, the result was often the one teach – one assist model in the co-taught classrooms and was evident in all five schools as one of the co-teaching models used during the co-implementation process. The literature stated this would happen and was evident in the work by Magiera and Zigmond (2005), Murawski (2010), and Weiss and Lloyd (2003). Thus, no value was necessarily added by the second professional on the team (Cramer & Nevin, 2006; Mastropieri et al, 2005; Zigmond, 2006; Zigmond & Matta, 2004).

During the process of co-implementation, there were effective practices seen in the co-taught classrooms. Some of these practices also appeared in the literature and involved co-teachers equally sharing classroom management and instructional duties, equally maintaining areas of responsibility, having matched compatibility between the co-teachers, and using specific co-teaching models such as team teaching (Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Murawski, 2010; Weiss & Lloyd, 2003).

There were also not effective practices evident in the co-taught classrooms. None of the five special education co-teachers were able to spend sufficient time in the co-taught classrooms to support all the needs of the students with high incidence disabilities. The time spent by these individuals ranged from 75 minutes to three and one-half hours daily. Baker (1995), Welch

(2000), and Zigmond (1995) referenced times co-teaching in the general education classroom as 90 minutes or less. Even though some of the study participants spent more time than was referenced in the literature, it was not enough to support the needs of the students as stated by the special education co-teachers during the interviews. Because these special education co-teachers were saddled with providing co-teaching in multiple classrooms and grade levels, as well as providing services to students with high incidence disabilities through the use of a pullout model, they were not as effective as they could have been. This sentiment was a common theme among the special education co-teachers. Even though the administrators declared that division of labor was shared equally between the two co-teachers, the co-teachers did not express the same view during the interview process. Unequal distribution of labor in the classrooms, supported by the literature, was seen in the areas of classroom management, instructional duties, and maintenance of specific areas of responsibility (Austin, 2001; Daane et al., 2000). As a result, observations of co-planning and co-implementation and interviews with the co-teachers showed a hierarchy between the co-teachers, as well as a conflict in regard to who did the most for the co-taught classroom.

Overall Themes

After extensive data collection and an in-depth look at the data, four central themes emerged. This was a result of combining multiple data points in the study. These four themes included (a) relationships, (b) expectations, (c) roles and responsibilities, and (d) resources. All four were needed in order to provide successful co-taught classrooms. If a single area was missing or significantly deprived, an optimal environment would not exist for students with high incidence disabilities and would inhibit their opportunities to meet with success.

Relationships. The relationships between first, the administrators and the co-teachers and second, the relationships between the general education co-teachers and the special education co-teachers were overall positive and attributed to co-teaching being successful. These individuals' perceptions were that they were able to provide environments where students with high incidence disabilities grew socially, received sufficient support, and were academically successful. This finding was matched with the literature by Daane et al. (2000), Hang and Rabren (2009), Pickard (2009), and Pugach and Wesson (1995). The co-teachers perceived that the relationships with their partners were positive and that the two of them felt compatible. This was stated in the literature as being significant components for both of the co-teachers for successful participation in the process of co-teaching (Austin, 2001; Daane et al., 2000; Magiera et al., 2006; Mastropieri et al., 2005; Trent et al., 2003). Through the process of co-planning, even though in this study co-planning was completed outside of the school day, most of these co-teachers felt that they worked well as a team and were on the way to becoming a single unit. This was supported in the research completed by Phillips and Sapona (1995) and Trent et al. (2003). It was obvious, throughout the study process, that participants perceived elements for effective relationships, resulting in successful co-implementation, as communication, flexibility, respect, and organization. Administrative support was needed for both co-planning and co-implementation. The administrators provided verbal support for the process of co-teaching. However, they were limited by supports available within their districts and individual school environments which affected the provision of appropriate co-taught instruction. Research that supported these areas included Daane et al. (2000), Gerber and Popp (2000), and Magiera et al. (2006). Without these supports, relationships between the participants in the study did appear to

be jeopardized which could hinder the growth of the co-teachers and the students with high incidence disabilities in these co-taught classrooms.

Expectations. A major expectation for co-teachers, from each other as well as the administrators, was equal responsibility for what transpired in the classroom. An equal partnership was expected and necessary when it came to co-teaching and allowed the general education co-teacher and the special education co-teacher to work together without a hierarchy. Adams and Cessna (1993) referred to this type of arrangement as doing the *dance.* A second expectation from all participants was to set long-range goals and objectives which was also evident in the research by Baker (1995), Pugach and Wesson (1995), and Welch (2000). This allowed for the study participants to provide direction for a path forward for all students, but particularly students with high incidence disabilities, in an attempt to reach their goals. As one administrator offered, "You get what you expect." In order to get the expectations set and then in an attempt to achieve them, both co-teachers and administrators held instrumental roles. Together these study participants had to co-plan, create sessions for team building and problem solving, in addition to obtaining the administrator's support for their co-teaching efforts. These same areas were determined as needed by Cramer and Nevin (2006) and Gerber and Popp (2000) in their research. A final expectation was to individualize for the needs of the students with disabilities with a focus on many aspects of co-teaching and not a single aspect such as accommodations. Particular areas in need of consideration were caseloads and student scheduling when clustering students with high incidence disabilities for the co-taught classroom (Austin, 2001; Daane et al., 2000; Gerber & Popp, 2000; Magiera et al., 2006; Walther-Thomas, 1997; Zigmond, 1995). If consideration was not given to the mixture of students placed in the

co-taught classroom, co-teaching had the potential to become burdensome for both co-teachers and had the potential to result in failure.

Roles and Responsibilities. The role of the administrator, in each school, was one of a leader who supported the co-teachers and boosted the spirit of the co-taught classroom throughout the school and community. This was seen in every school. Co-teachers' roles required an equal partnership with joint responsibility in instruction, classroom management, accountability, and decision-making. In order for the co-teachers to be successful, compatibility and development of a single unit were necessary (Baker, 1995; Salend et al., 1997).

With the above structures in place, the co-teachers were able to provide the best educational environment for each student. The co-teachers were mostly able to create these environments. However, the interviews revealed how certain special education co-teachers allowed the general education co-teachers to take more of their share of responsibility in the preparation of materials, in conducting the co-planning sessions, and in leading during co-implementation. This resulted in a hierarchy and a feeling by the general education co-teachers that they did more than the special education co-teachers for the co-taught classrooms.

Each co-teacher brought diverse training and skills to both the co-planning and co-implementation sessions. With a determination to create a dynamic partnership, the general education co-teacher and the special education co-teacher were able to be equal partners and create an environment without a hierarchy that required constant control of the classroom by one of the participants. All of these roles and responsibilities needed to be taken into consideration when conducting the co-planning and co-implementation sessions in order to create an environment within the true spirit of co-teaching (Welch, 2000).

During co-implementation, a variety of co-teaching models were observed. They were also discussed by the co-teachers and the administrators during the interview process. Most prevalent in the schools was participation in team teaching, station teaching, and one teach – one assist models for instruction. Only one other model was observed which consisted of student dyads or pairs. Both Morocco and Aguilar (2002) and Friend (2008) spoke highly of team teaching and station teaching and encouraged the use of these two co-teaching models. Friend (2008) described the one teach – one assist model as one co-teacher in the lead role while the other co-teacher functioned as a support to the classroom. This co-teaching model was seldom encouraged but appeared frequently during the observations.

Resources. Material and technology resources were prevalent throughout all school environments. All co-teachers were using these resources to enhance their instruction in the co-taught classrooms. Use of these resources were discussed during co-planning and seen in use during co-implementation by the co-teachers. Interviews with all participants referenced availability and use of these resources in the classroom.

Other types of resources were challenging for schools. These challenges consisted of scheduled co-planning time, large caseloads, and personnel support. The same issues were noted in the literature by Mastropieri et al. (2005), Trent et al. (2003), and Walther-Thomas (1997). Time to co-plan is viewed as one component for success by Mastropieri et al. (2005) and an area in need of attention by Austin (2001), Magiera et al. (2006), Magiera & Zigmond (2005), Phillips & Sapona, (1995), Pickard (2009), Trent et al. (2003), Walther-Thomas (1997), and Welch (2000). Frustration was apparent when interviewing the study participants about the topic of co-planning. One administrator shared that she thought lack of time to co-plan was an area of weakness. The co-teachers were vocal about the need for a weekly scheduled co-planning time

during the school day and thought it should be made available by administrators through adjustments in the master schedule. Some of the study participants were not able to meet on a regular basis and although not optimal, co-planning was "on the fly" or not meeting to co-plan became necessary (Magiera & Zigmond, 2005). In the literature, lack of co-planning caused the co-teaching partnerships to be uncomfortable in the process of co-teaching (Daane et al., 2000). One of the study participants, a special education co-teacher, shared that when co-teachers were not able to meet to co-plan and the planning was completed by the general education co-teacher alone, the special education co-teacher was clueless when it came time to co-implement the lesson. Another general education co-teacher shared that she realized that when the two co-teachers were not able to meet to co-plan, there was an awkward flow to their co-implementation process. However frustrating it was, these co-teachers gave of their personal time and met their obligation to co-plan which took place outside of the school day. Their dedication to their co-teaching program and their students was evident and showed in their co-planning and co-implementation sessions.

Walther-Thomas (1997) addressed an additional area in need of attention which consisted of large caseloads. These same issues appeared in this study as the number of students with high incidence disabilities in the general education classrooms ranged from three to eight. The percentages of students with disabilities ranged from 12 percent to 44 percent in these classrooms. General education classrooms with high percentages of students with disabilities and the diversity of their needs would be a challenge for any group of co-teachers. This challenge would be insurmountable for a general education classroom teacher, who had not received training in special education strategies, without the support of a special education co-teacher throughout the school day. In the absence of a co-teaching model, a culture of two

separate entities would exist in order to meet the needs of these students with disabilities (Friend & Cook, 2007; Senge et al., 2000). In this case, the schoolhouse becomes divided and teachers return to teaching in isolation.

Ample trained personnel, needed to support the co-teaching program, were not available throughout this study. From the perspectives of all the study participants, the need for trained special education co-teachers was a consistent point of contention. The special education co-teachers were limited in their availability to be present in the co-taught classroom. Their availability ranged from 75 minutes to three and one-half hours. The remainder of their school day was spent working with students in other classrooms or individually in the special education classroom in a pullout situation. In the literature, the co-teaching times ranged from 35 minutes to 90 minutes daily (Baker, 1995; Welch, 2000; Zigmond, 1995). Daane et al. (2000) acknowledged the limited time that the special education co-teacher had available to be in the co-taught classroom doing co-teaching and considered it to be a major concern. Because these special education co-teachers were not afforded more time during the school day for co-teaching, it affected the relationships between the co-teachers. Frustration occurred as the general education co-teachers were left alone to teach the students with and without disabilities for the remainder of the school day without supports. As a result, students with disabilities had academic needs which were not met, and often IEPs were rewritten to provide services within the boundaries of the availability of resources at the school and classroom levels.

Implications for Practice

Based on the results of this multicase study, it was evident that the administrators at both the district and school levels and the co-teachers at the school level were instrumental in creating and supporting an inclusive school culture, for students with high incidence disabilities, albeit at

various levels. The practices of co-planning and co-implementation used in co-teaching were impacted both positively and negatively by the school culture and resulted in the use of effective and not effective practices being used in both areas. Because of the initiative of this district to move toward 100 percent inclusion, there is a need to consider how total inclusion, with all disability categories, would further impact education, as this study only addressed high incidence disabilities.

The lack of co-planning time was pervasive throughout the interviews among the study participants. This same issue was evident in multiple studies addressed in the literature review. Two of these studies were conducted by Mastropieri et al. (2005) and Trent et al. (2003).

School districts may consider addressing the concerns about the provision of a scheduled co-planning time during the school day to support the inclusion process. This would provide time for the co-teachers to adequately access students' needs and differentiate instruction to meet those needs. It would also allow time for the co-teachers to build their relationships, set the expectations, and determine the roles and responsibilities for each participant and thus create a single unit to best meet the needs of the students with high incidence disabilities.

Large caseloads for the special education co-teachers were considered an area in need of attention by Walther-Thomas (1997). The large caseloads for the special education co-teachers in each of these schools were problematic. These special education co-teachers struggled with providing ample time in the co-taught classrooms, as well as meeting the needs of all of their students with disabilities. Some of the co-taught classrooms in the study had upwards of eight out of eighteen students with disabilities in the co-taught classroom. These special education co-teachers also had students with disabilities on their caseloads, which were not in this co-taught classroom and needed services through a different model.

School districts may consider addressing the concerns about the large caseloads and providing a lower student to teacher ratio (i.e., students with disabilities to special education teacher). This would provide more of an opportunity for time to be spent in the co-taught classroom by the special education co-teacher, as well as an opportunity for the teachers to better meet the needs of all of their students with disabilities. In addition, it would help to avoid a culture of two separate entities and the return to teaching in isolation.

Daane et al. (2000) shared a major concern about the limited time that special education co-teachers had availability to be present in the co-taught classroom. All study participants shared this same concern. Without sufficient time allotted in their schedules to be in the co-taught classroom, the special education co-teachers were fearful of not being able to meet the needs of their students with disabilities.

Ample trained personnel (i.e., special education teachers) are needed in the schools for the designated supports of the students with high incidence disabilities. School districts may want to consider viewing the needs of the students with disabilities within the co-taught classrooms and then consider supplying the number of trained special education co-teachers to meet those needs. This would provide the opportunity for delivery of a true co-teaching model. In addition, it would supply co-teachers with the opportunity to create successful relationships, develop expectations, and successfully carry out their roles and responsibilities together. In turn, these individuals will have a chance to develop an inclusive model that will support all students and particularly those students with high incidence disabilities.

Implications for Policy

Literature described the need for support from the district, school, and classroom levels in order to create successful co-teaching environments (Walsh, 2012). Policy changes and funding

at the state level would support co-teaching and help to extend the inclusion movement. A change of this type would require inclusion in each individual state's initiatives, as well as promotion at the national level. Through policy changes and funding support at the state and national levels, inclusive co-teaching environments could become a viable option for students with disabilities in all states (Muller, Friend, & Hurley-Chamberlain, 2009).

Some states are proactive in including the option of an education degree whereby preservice teachers graduate from college with certification in both general education and special education. If a state does not include this type of model, then it should be considered. Education of this type would better prepare preservice teachers for the realities of the current day classroom and offer the potential for improved student outcomes. A change, by the individual states, in licensure to include the requirement of endorsements in both general education and special education upon graduation from college would force changes in coursework at the university level. This blended training would provide a knowledge base for preservice teachers to be able to then work with all students in venues such as co-teaching. The combination of two co-teachers trained in both general education and special education working in a co-teaching model would provide their students with an environment inclusive of strategies and supports for growth and the potential for positive student outcomes. In addition, the provision of mentors, trained in general education, special education, and co-teaching, for these first year teachers would provide support as they are inducted into the teaching profession and the culture of the schools.

The results of this multicase study showed a lack of co-planning time was pervasive throughout the interviews with the study participants. Literature addressed this same issue. Two examples were studies conducted by Mastropieri et al. (2005) and Trent et al. (2003).

In order to support the school districts in their attempts to provide scheduled co-planning time during the school day and thus support the inclusion process, state and federal governments may want to implement policy to support this need. If scheduled co-planning time is mandated, the time could be spent on strengthening relationships, clearly defining expectations, and determining roles and responsibilities for each participant. The resulting product would be one that best meets the needs of students with high incidence disabilities within the least restrictive environment and supports the inclusion movement.

The problematic issue with large caseloads for special education co-teachers was addressed in this study. This area was also considered in need of attention by Walther-Thomas (1997). Oftentimes, special education co-teachers struggled with providing instruction in multiple grade levels and meeting the needs of all of their students with disabilities. As a result, some students were provided co-teaching while others were instructed in a pullout model.

In order to support the school districts in their attempts to address special education co-teachers' large caseloads, state and federal governments may want to implement policy to support this need. If smaller caseloads for special education co-teachers are mandated, more time could be spent on identifying and supporting the needs of students with high incidence disabilities. In addition, this mandate would allow more access for students with high incidence disabilities to participate in co-teaching environments and the general education curriculum. Thus, the mandate would support the inclusion movement and unite the school house.

In the literature, Daane et al. (2000) shared a major concern about the limited time that special education co-teachers had availability to be present in the co-taught classroom. This same concern was shared by all study participants during the interview process. The special education co-teachers were especially concerned, because they did not feel that they had

sufficient time in the co-taught classrooms in order to meet the needs of their students with high incidence disabilities. Multiple grade levels and weighted counts of 20 or more played into this issue for the special education co-teachers.

In order to support the school districts in their attempts to address special education co-teachers' limited time in the co-taught classrooms, state and federal governments may want to implement policy to support this need. Multiple grade levels and high weighted counts play into this issue. If there is a mandate for a change in the weighted counts based on inclusion of these students in co-teaching models, then districts would be able to hire additional special education co-teachers to support the students with high incidence disabilities for this venue. It is important to note that full inclusion has to match the resources. A policy change at the state level may want to consider a change in weighted counts whereby, the students solely participating in co-teaching would count as a two for resource services (i.e., 1 to 45 percent) and a three for self-contained services (i.e., 50 to 100 percent). Grade levels could then be adjusted so that special education co-teachers would be limited to no more than two grades. This would also limit the use of instructional assistants in the co-taught classrooms where two certified co-teachers are supposed to be conducting instruction, which exemplifies the true co-teaching model. As a result of this mandate, co-teachers would be able to strengthen their relationships, determine expectations for students and the classroom, and share equally the roles and responsibilities in an attempt to provide the best inclusive environment for students with high incidence disabilities within the least restrictive environment.

Limitations of the Study

A limitation of this study was that it was completed by a single researcher. In itself, this was a limitation of qualitative research design. As a prior special education co-teacher and

special education administrator with over 30 years of experience, it was impossible for the researcher to divorce past experiences, values, and beliefs. As stated in the literature by Bogdan and Biklen (2007), it is imperative that the researcher acknowledge this reality to address this limitation. In an attempt to ensure that the findings were based on information provided by the participants and to ensure trustworthiness, a field journal was kept throughout the study after each interaction with each participant. In addition, descriptive/reflective protocols were used during and after each observation to extend trustworthiness and address the potential for observer bias. The use of observations and interviews also gave the researcher multiple perspectives, interests, and realities which was important for establishing trustworthiness (Patton, 2002).

Another potential limitation in this qualitative study was observer effect. In an attempt to minimize the possibility for the effect that an observer may have in the classroom, the researcher met with each group of participants at the five schools prior to the start of the study. This provided an opportunity for the researcher to develop a relationship with the participants and put them at ease about the study. Each team was informed of the study particulars and given an opportunity, at this time, to volunteer if they still wished to participate.

Future Research

This study has added to existing literature about school culture. In addition, it expanded an avenue that was lacking in the literature about how school culture links to inclusion of students with high incidence disabilities through the process of co-teaching with a focus on the practices of co-planning and co-implementation. However, there still remains unanswered questions and areas for future research.

Research over the past 20 years demonstrates that co-teaching has been a widespread practice (Gerber & Popp, 2000; Pugach & Wesson, 1995; Salend et al., 1997; Walther-Thomas,

1997). Since this documented research did not include data that specified the frequency at which co-teaching occurred, future research could focus on this data collection strategy. This would be an opportunity to determine not only the frequency of co-teaching but the make-up of the teams (i.e., general education co-teacher and special education co-teacher or general education co-teacher and instructional assistant). Data from the current study is a start for this data collection. Results indicated that 15 percent to 54 percent of the co-teaching instruction included a general education co-teacher and a special education co-teacher, while four percent to 21 percent included a general education co-teacher and an instructional assistant.

Co-planning and co-implementation practices, both effective and not effective practices, were collected in multiple research studies. Some of these studies included Austin (2001), Daane et al. (2000), Gerber & Popp (2000), Magiera et al. (2006), Mastropieri et al. (2005), Trent et al. (2003), Walther-Thomas (1997), and Welch (2000). No studies had synthesized practices used by co-teachers for co-planning or co-implementation. In addition, no reviews had synthesized information on the perceived effectiveness or lack of effectiveness for the practices. Since this documented research did not include this synthesized data, future research could focus on this data collection. This would be an opportunity to determine perceived effective and quality practices for use during co-planning and co-implementation. It would also help to identify practices that were not effective and therefore should not be used during co-planning and co-implementation. This information could then be used as a resource in training future co-teachers and for the improvement of those co-teachers currently working in co-taught classrooms.

Different co-teaching models were addressed in the literature (Morocco & Aguilar, 2002; Friend, 2008). Friend (2008) described the one teach – one assist model as a seldom used model

that has one teacher in a lead role while the other teacher is only functioning in a supportive, passive role. This model was one that was in use in four out of the five co-implementation sessions in the study. Other models were also observed which included station teaching, team teaching, alternate leading and supporting, and flexible grouping. Since the research states that one teach – one assist was to be used on a seldom basis and the fact that this model was used in four of the five observations, future research could focus on data collection about co-teaching models being used in the classroom. After initial data collection, training about additional co-teaching models could be provided to one-half of the group of participants. Follow-up observations for all participants would then need to occur in order to determine if the training had an impact on the use of other co-teaching models. Following the training and observations, data could be collected on which co-teaching models were most effective based on student outcomes.

Summary

This multicase study provides information about how school and classroom cultures affect practices of inclusion for students with high incidence disabilities, how co-teaching is affected by the school culture, and why some co-planning and co-implementation practices work while others do not work. With a focus on norms, values, and routines and the use of observations and interviews, the researcher was able to observe themes emerge from the data. These themes included relationships, expectations, roles and responsibilities, and resources. Working together, these four themes have the potential to create successful district, school, and classroom cultures that promote inclusion of students with high incidence disabilities through use of a co-teaching model. With these four themes fully in place, the administrators and co-teachers

will be able to provide the best educational environment for each student and create inclusive environments which are accepting of all people.

The researcher agrees that a positive school culture and inclusion of students with high incidence disabilities is a viable option if all participants are supportive of the concept and each other. A change in mindset for an inclusive environment, at all levels, is also necessary to make this option possible. Resources are the biggest challenges for implementation of the co-teaching process in the areas of co-planning and co-implementation. With appropriate resources, the co-planning and co-implementation processes will provide opportunities for unique growth experiences for staff and students. This will result in excellent instruction to meet the needs of all students with and without disabilities in an inclusive schoolhouse which no longer has separate entities. Thus, district, school, and classroom cultures do affect inclusion of students with disabilities. It is the result of people believing in, pooling resources, and working together that create a microcosm of an inclusive world within the confines of the school environment. When this environment becomes the norm, students without disabilities become more accepting of students with disabilities, which then carry on into the real world as these individuals transition into adulthood.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Co-teaching Partnerships: How Culture of Schools and Classrooms Affect Practices in Co-planning and Co-implementing Instruction
Research Study Information Sheet

Description: This research study is attempting to describe (a) how the school and classroom cultures affect practices of inclusion for students with disabilities and (b) how the inclusionary practice of co-teaching, and its use of co-planning and co-implementation for providing appropriate services within the least restrictive environment, is influenced by the school and classroom cultures in grades three, four, and five.

Nature of the information: The information will be about the administrators' and co-teachers' (i.e., general education teachers and special education teachers co-teaching teams) perceptions of the school's culture and the culture's impact on practices of inclusion for students with disabilities and their perceptions on how the school culture impacts the practices of co-planning and co-implementation.

Your involvement: As a building level administrator, you will be asked to (a) participate in a one-on-one interview for approximately one hour, and (b) allow the researcher to shadow you for two hours. As a co-teacher, you will be asked to (a) participate in a one-on-one interview for approximately one hour, (b) allow the researcher to observe a co-planning session, and (c) allow the researcher to observe in your classroom when you are co-implementing the lesson. This research study will be conducted over a period of three months. Your individual involvement will last approximately one to two weeks.

Participation: Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You have the right to discontinue your participation at any time throughout the process should you wish to do so.

Data collection and storage: The data will be collected, coded, and stored in a safe location throughout the duration of the research study. The information will then be compiled and the raw data will be destroyed.

Confidentiality: No identifying information will be collected or recorded. Pseudonyms will be used in place of names.

Statement: The information collected will be used to write a dissertation and will then be put forth as a journal article. If you have questions, please contact the following:

Cecilia G. Batalo, M.Ed.
batalocg@vcu.edu

Appendix B

Teacher Consent Form for the Co-teaching Partnerships:
How Culture of Schools and Classrooms Affect Practices in
Co-planning and Co-implementing Instruction
Research Study

Leader: Cecilia Batalo, Student Investigator
I _____ have volunteered to participate in the Research Study being conducted by Cecilia Batalo on Co-teaching Partnerships: How Culture of Schools and Classrooms Affect Practices in Co-planning and Co-implementing Instruction.

Purpose: I understand that the purpose of this research study is to focus on how the school and classroom cultures affect practices of inclusion for students with disabilities and (b) how the inclusionary practice of co-teaching, and its use of co-planning and co-implementation for providing appropriate services within the least restrictive environment, is influenced by the school and classroom cultures in grades three, four, and five.

Duration and Location: I understand the research study will last for a total of three months, with my individual involvement taking part during predetermined times over a one to two week time period. All interactions with the researcher will be in-person at my school.

Procedures: I understand that the program will require me to do the following:
- Participate in a one-on-one interview for approximately one hour;
- Allow the researcher to conduct an observation of a co-planning session;
- Allow the researcher to conduct a classroom observation of co-implementation of the lesson.

Risks/Discomforts: It has been explained to me that I can contact the Student Investigator, Cecilia Batalo, if I have any questions or concerns about the research study or other aspects of my experience that may cause discomfort.

Benefits: I understand that the benefits from participating in this research study are (a) to provide for me the opportunity to be a part of the study, (b) develop an understanding of how the school and classroom cultures affect practices of inclusion for students with disabilities, and (c) develop an understanding of how the inclusionary practice of co-teaching, and its use of co-planning and co-implementation for providing appropriate services within the least restrictive environment, is influenced by the school and classroom cultures in grades three, four, and five.

Confidentiality: I understand that coded numbers will be used to identify my responses from those of other participants and that my name, address, and other identifying information will not be associated with any information obtained from me. A master list of persons participating in this research study and their identifying information will be kept in a secure location until the end of the research study, at which time it will be destroyed.

Costs: I understand that there are no costs for participating in this study other than the time I will spend in the interviews.

Payments: As a participant in this research project, I understand that I will not be compensated for my time. The payment will be in knowledge gained from the experience.

Alternatives: I understand that I have the alternative to not participate in the study.

Right to Withdraw: I understand that I do not have to take part in this research study, and my refusal to participate will involve no penalty of loss of rights to which I am entitled. I can withdraw from the research study at any time.

Signatures: I have read this entire consent form and completely understand my rights as a potential participant and I voluntarily consent to participate in this research study. I have been informed that I will receive a copy of this consent should questions arise and I wish to contact Cecilia Batalo (batalocg@vcu.edu; 804-677-1426), Dr. Paul Gerber (pjgerber@vcu.edu; 804-827-2634), or the Office of Research Subjects Protection at Virginia Commonwealth University (www.research.vcu.edu/irb/; 804-828-0868) to discuss my rights as a participant.

_____	_____	_____
Participant/Printed Name	Participant/Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Cecilia G. Batalo/Printed Name Student Investigator	Cecilia G. Batalo/Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Principal Investigator/Printed Name	Principal Investigator/Signature	Date

Appendix C

Administrator Consent Form for the Co-teaching Partnerships: How Culture of Schools and Classrooms Affect Practices in Co-planning and Co-implementing Instruction Research Study

Leader: Cecilia Batalo, Student Investigator

I _____ have volunteered to participate in the Research Study being conducted by Cecilia Batalo on Co-teaching Partnerships: How Culture of Schools and Classrooms Affect Practices in Co-planning and Co-implementing Instruction.

Purpose: I understand that the purpose of this research study is to focus on how the school and classroom cultures affect practices of inclusion for students with disabilities and (b) how the inclusionary practice of co-teaching, and its use of co-planning and co-implementation for providing appropriate services within the least restrictive environment, is influenced by the school and classroom cultures in grades three, four, and five.

Duration and Location: I understand the research study will last for a total of three months, with my individual involvement taking part during predetermined times over a one to two time week period. All interactions with the researcher will be in-person at my school.

Procedures: I understand that the program will require me to do the following:

- Participate in a one-on-one interview for approximately one hour;
- Allow the researcher to shadow me for two hours.

Risks/Discomforts: It has been explained to me that I can contact the Student Investigator, Cecilia Batalo, if I have any questions or concerns about the research study or other aspects of my experience that may cause discomfort.

Benefits: I understand that the benefits from participating in this research study are (a) to provide for me the opportunity to be a part of the study, (b) develop an understanding of how the school and classroom cultures affect practices of inclusion for students with disabilities, and (c) develop an understanding of how the inclusionary practice of co-teaching, and its use of co-planning and co-implementation for providing appropriate services within the least restrictive environment, is influenced by the school and classroom cultures in grades three, four, and five.

Confidentiality: I understand that coded numbers will be used to identify my responses from those of other participants and that my name, address, and other identifying information will not be associated with any information obtained from me. A master list of persons participating in this research study and their identifying information will be kept in a secure location until the end of the research study, at which time it will be destroyed.

Costs: I understand that there are no costs for participating in this study other than the time I will spend in the interviews.

Payments: As a participant in this research project, I understand that I will not be compensated for my time. The payment will be in knowledge gained from the experience.

Alternatives: I understand that I have the alternative to not participate in the study.

Right to Withdraw: I understand that I do not have to take part in this research study, and my refusal to participate will involve no penalty of loss of rights to which I am entitled. I can withdraw from the research study at any time.

Signatures: I have read this entire consent form and completely understand my rights as a potential participant and I voluntarily consent to participate in this research study. I have been informed that I will receive a copy of this consent should questions arise and I wish to contact Cecilia Batalo (batalocg@vcu.edu; 804-677-1426), Dr. Paul Gerber (pjgerber@vcu.edu; 804-827-2634) or the Office of Research Subjects Protection at Virginia Commonwealth University (www.research.vcu.edu/irb/; 804-828-0868) to discuss my rights as a participant.

_____	_____	_____
Participant/Printed Name	Participant/Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Cecilia G. Batalo/Printed Name Student Investigator	Cecilia G. Batalo/Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Principal Investigator/Printed Name	Principal Investigator/Signature	Date

Appendix D

Co-Teaching Elementary Planning and Observation Checklist

General Education Teacher _____ Grade Level _____
Special Education Teacher _____ Date of Observation _____
Subject(s) Observed _____ Time _____
Observer _____ Position _____

Rating Scale: P = Planned E= Evident at least once NE= Not evident

Lesson presentation, instruction, and instructional materials	P	E	NE	Comment(s)
Teachers' learning expectations, directions, and procedures are clearly defined for students.				
Teachers' use of research-based instructional strategies is observed throughout the lesson.				
Teachers demonstrate differentiation in content, process, product, and/or learning environment.				
Teachers include graphic organizers/study guides appropriate to the lesson.				
Teachers include technology that is integrated and age appropriate.				
Teachers have students engaged in challenging, meaningful, and appropriate work that facilitates learning.				
Teachers' encourage student participation in lesson activities through use of questioning techniques.				
Both co-teachers' voices are heard in the teaching/learning process.				
Teachers present instructional lessons in a variety of ways.				
Both co-teachers interject ideas for clarification of lesson content.				
Teachers use a variety of appropriate instructional materials appropriate to engage and motivate learners while respectful of their age/grade.				
Both co-teachers provide feedback to guide students' learning.				
Teachers facilitate smooth transitions from activity to activity within and between lessons.				
Grouping patterns. Circle all that apply.				

Pairs Small Groups Whole Class				
Co-teaching Models	**P**	**E**	**NE**	**Comment(s)**
Circle all models observed. *Alternate Leading and Supporting ***Station Teaching ***Parallel Teaching *Flexible Grouping ***Alternate Teaching ***Team Teaching **One Teach/One Observe **One Teach/One Assist				

*Morocco & Aguilar ** Friend ***Both

Classroom Structure	**P**	**E**	**NE**	**Comment(s)**
Two co-teachers are simultaneously present in the classroom.				
Two co-teachers are active in the presentation of the lesson and assessment process.				
Two co-teachers move throughout the classroom and assist and monitor all students' learning.				
Teachers' classroom rules and expectations are in place and adhered to by the students.				
Teachers use nonverbal communication to manage classroom behavior and direct instruction.				
Additional Comments				

Instructional Delivery Method Observed within Co-taught Classrooms Check all that apply.	
Class discussion	
Distance learning	
Group work	
Guided practice	
Hands-on activities	
Learning centers	
Lecture	
Peer evaluation	
Question and answer	
Seat work (e.g., worksheets, textbook readings)	
Student presentations	
Other	

Instructional Strategies Observed within Co-taught Classrooms Check all that apply.	
Advance organizers	
Graphic organizers	
Nonlinguistic representation	
Problem-based/project-based learning	
Similarities and differences	
Summarizing and note taking	
Other	

Technology

Was technology used? ___ Yes ___ No
If yes, check type(s) use and level.

Type(s) of Technology

___ Computer
___ Calculator
___ Teacher workstation
___ Whiteboard
___ CD Player
___ Digital camera/multimedia
___ Internet
___ Projector
___ Promethean Whiteboard
___ Other

Technology Use Level

___ Level 1 – Centers on acquiring and practicing technical skills; technology is something to learn.
___ Level 2 – Automates traditional teacher and student roles; technology is optional.
___ Level 3 – Expands role and/or products; technology is essential.

Note: Co-teaching Elementary Observation Checklist created by adapting and merging the *Co-Teaching Observation Checklist* by Central Savannah River Area Regional Education Service Agency and East Georgia Learning Resources System, 2006 and *Observation Charts: Instructional Delivery Method Observed, Instructional Strategies*, and *Technology* from the Teacher Education Program at Virginia Commonwealth University, 2011.

Co-Teaching Elementary Planning and Observation Checklist/Worksheet	**Comments** **1**
Expectations, directions, and procedures	
Research-based instructional strategies	
Differentiation - content, process, product, learning environment	
Graphic organizers/study guides	
Technology	
Challenging, meaningful, and appropriate work	
Questioning techniques	
Both voices in process	
Variety of instructional lessons	

Co-Teaching Elementary Planning and Observation Checklist/Worksheet	**Comments** **2**
Both interject ideas	
Variety of appropriate instructional materials	
Both provide feedback	
Transitions between activities	
Both simultaneously present	
Both presenting and assessing	
Both move, assist, and monitor	
Rules and expectations	
Both manage behavior and direct instruction	

Appendix E

Individual Interview Protocol and Semi-structured Interview Questions
Co-teaching Partnerships:
How Culture of Schools and Classrooms Affect Practices in
Co-planning and Co-implementing Instruction
Research Study

Hello, my name is Cecilia Batalo and I am a doctoral student at Virginia Commonwealth University. I am conducting a multicase research study on how cultures of schools and classrooms affect inclusion of students with disabilities and co-planning and co-implementing practices with co-teachers. Your school was one of five elementary schools selected from the district to participate in this research study. Please know that your participation is valued. It is hoped that data gained from this study will add to the body of scholarly literature about how school and classroom cultures affect practices of inclusion for students with disabilities and how the use of the co-teaching model is influenced by the school culture.

Let us review the document explaining the study and the consent form. Your participation in this study is voluntary and if you choose to participate, please sign the consent form. If you choose not to participate, you may leave without any fear of retribution from me, the school district, or Virginia Commonwealth University.

REVIEW EXPLANATORY DOCUMENT AND CONSENT FORM

I would like to audiotape our interview to transcribe for analysis. Audio taping the interview allows me to check accuracy of content and later use when member checking the information with you. Your anonymity will be protected in the final written document.

Semi-structured Interview Questions

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this research study. I will ask you six questions. I would like for you to share your knowledge with me about the culture in the school and classroom, practices of inclusion for students with disabilities, and co-teaching practices at this school.

School culture consists of norms, values, and routines. Together, the school staff constructs meaning toward a shared purpose of academic and social success for students and teachers. This purpose is evidenced throughout the school, in classrooms, and among the staff.

1. Everyone has their own philosophy on teaching and school culture. How do you, as the (administrator, general education co-teacher, special education co-teacher) perceive your school's culture? How have you carried out your philosophy of education in your role?

   *(Probes: Norms, values, routines in (a) the school environment (b) and your role as an administrator or co-teacher. Tell me more about your philosophy. Tell me about your classroom culture.)
2. What is your perception of the impact of this school's culture on practices of inclusion for students with disabilities?

   *(Probes: How does it promote inclusive practices? Which practices are promoted? Ask for other models of inclusion. Additional practices which support inclusion. Other practices that could be implemented in this environment.)

3. What do you perceive as effective and not effective practices at this school for first co-planning and second co-implementation?

   *(Probes: Tell me more about effective/not effective practices for co-planning. Tell me more about effective/not effective practices for co-implementation. Further co-teaching strategies that you may consider as effective/not effective.)

4. What is your perception of the (a) administrator's, (b) general education co-teacher's, or (c) special education co-teacher's role and its impact on effective and not effective practices for co-planning?

   *(Probes: Tell me more about the administrator's or general education teacher's role or special education teacher's role.)

5. What is your perception of the (a) administrator's, (b) general education co-teacher's, or (c) special education co-teacher's role and its impact on effective and not effective practices for co-implementation?

   *(Probes: Tell me more about the administrator's role or general education teacher's role or special education teacher's role. Resources available, such as planning time. Administrative decisions. Staff values.)

6. How do you as the (administrator, general education co-teacher, special education co-teacher) perceive the impact of the school's culture on the practice of first co-planning and second co-implementation and why?

   *(Probes: Tell me more. Talk about supports available. Talk about routines. Tell how it is valued.)

Thank you again for your participation in this interview process. If you have questions pertaining to this interview, please feel free to contact me.

Appendix F

Administrator Descriptive/Reflective Protocol

Administrator: _____
Date: _____
Length of Activity: _____

E = Events
N = Norms, Safe physical environment, Implementation of processes
V = Values, Encourages risk-taking, High expectations for teachers and students, Nature of relationships, Provision of resources
R = Routines, Visits all classrooms, Effective communication with students and staff, Shared responsibilities, Flexibility
RS = Reactions of staff, Positive attitude, High morale

Descriptive Notes	Reflective Notes

Appendix G

Co-planning Descriptive/Reflective Protocol

General Education Teacher: _____
Special Education Teacher: _____
Date: _____
Length of Activity: _____

I = Interactions, Positive attitude, High morale
N = Norms, Instructional practices of curriculum content, Implementation of processes in the learning environment
V = Values, Encourages risk-taking, High expectations for teachers and students, Nature of relationships
R = Routines, Effective communication between partners, Shared responsibilities, Flexibility
R = Roles, Equal partners
S = Safe physical environment

Descriptive Notes	Reflective Notes

Appendix H

Co-implementation Descriptive/Reflective Protocol

General Education Teacher: _____
Special Education Teacher: _____
Date: _____
Length of Activity: _____

P = Presentation, Instruction and materials
- N = Research-based instructional strategies, Implementation of processes
- V = Values, Encourages risk-taking, High expectations for teachers and students, Nature of relationships
- R = Routines, Effective communication between partners, Shared responsibilities, Flexibility

M = Model, Variety in choice of co-teaching models
- R = Routines, Effective communication between partners, Shared responsibilities, Flexibility

S = Structure, Shared teaching and behavior management
- V = Values, Encourages risk-taking, High expectations for teachers and students, Nature of relationships
- R = Routines, Effective communication between partners, Shared responsibilities, Flexibility

ST = Strategies, Instructional with variety of materials and activities
- V = Values, Encourages risk-taking, High expectations for teachers and students

T = Technology, Types, Level of use

Descriptive Notes	Reflective Notes

VITA

Cecilia Gray Batalo was born on September 15, 1953, in Petersburg, Virginia and is an American citizen. She received her Bachelor of Science degree from James Madison University, Harrisonburg, Virginia in 1974, her Master of Education degree from Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia in 1981, and her Postmaster's Certificate in Educational Leadership from Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia in 2004. Starting in January 1975, Ms. Batalo taught general education and special education for a total of 23 years in the public school setting for Petersburg Public Schools, Petersburg, Virginia, Colonial Heights Public Schools, Colonial Heights, Virginia, Chesterfield County Public Schools, Chesterfield, Virginia, and Henrico County Public Schools, Henrico, Virginia. In addition, she was a special education administrator for 10 years with Henrico County Public Schools, Henrico, Virginia. During 2012-2014, Ms. Batalo served as adjunct faculty for Virginia Commonwealth University. Beginning May 2014, Ms. Batalo will continue her affiliation with Virginia Commonwealth University as the Special Education Mentor Coordinator for the Richmond Teacher Residency Program.